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AFTER THREE WEEKS

THREE weeks of intensive bombing have not terrorised the population of London and they have not been successful in seriously dislocating communications or destroying military objectives. The Ministry of Food deserves special credit for the fact that food supplies are everywhere ample and normal. The home services, A.R.P., the fire fighters, the demolition and rescue squads, the bomb disposal units, and voluntary workers of many kinds—the W.V.S. has been conspicuously efficient—have all stood an intense strain with magnificent success. So much is true and recorded in every daily paper. But one of the oddest features of the situation is the complete failure of most of the national daily papers to deal in any but the most superficial way with the all-important human problems of East London. Damage where the building is substantial is often spectacular, but it presents no problem comparable to that of areas where whole streets are frequently demolished by one of Göring's new type of bomb. These districts are the most critical sector of the front line of the war at the present moment. How comes it that the *Times* and *Telegraph*, who vie with one another in rushing brilliant correspondents to Paris or Helsinki the moment they are bombed, have no reporters to give any adequate picture of regions which are close at hand, and which in some parts are now devastated as thoroughly as towns and villages not far from the front during the last war?

These conditions will not be hidden and Ministers must be aware that if they fail to deal adequately with the problem they may find themselves confronted with a criticism and a public mood highly dangerous to the authorities who are held responsible. Actually this country has won a victory over Hitler's air force, and if the administration can show the qualities which Mr. Churchill inspires in the Services, it will find that there is nothing in the London situation that is too difficult to handle. They need imagination and courage, but the courage required is far less than that needed to take big steps in the days before the Blitzkrieg. In time of peace Ministers who considered questions like A.R.P. and even slum clearance were subjected to all the distractions of party politics and vested interests. To-day they have everything to gain and nothing to lose by straightforward and imaginative action. Their careers and reputations, the success or failure of the war, the future health and freedom of this country, all depend on their vision and ability. No one will criticise them for bold action even if they make some mistakes; timidity and caution can only be disastrous to themselves and everyone else.

A start has been made. Let us list the steps which have been forced on reluctant Ministers by the overpowering and immediate needs of East London. Bunks are to be built in surface shelters and ear plugs are to be provided. If this is an effort to persuade the population of East London to sleep above ground and to abandon the tubes it will not succeed. Ear plugs, which we urged as essential for the whole population a year ago when the war began, are useful, but they will not persuade people to regard surface shelters as either quiet enough or safe enough. Secondly, evacuation is proceeding, though still at an insufficient rate and with inadequate organisation. A far larger number of empty houses should be requisitioned and more pressure, if not compulsion, should be used to clear out of the East End women and children and those who have no essential jobs to perform. Family loyalty and attachment to home surroundings are immensely strong in East London, but we have good evidence that as houses become untenable the reluctance to move is dwindling, and the sentiment we have heard commonly expressed in the East End is that if the women and kiddies are taken away the men who will remain at their posts will do so till Göring and the cows have gone home. Thirdly, communal meals are becoming far more general and an increasing number of rest centres are being set up in less vulnerable areas, where people have the opportunity of washing, changing their clothes and of receiving that personal attention which is essential to an intelligent policy of evacuation.

The tubes were not opened as shelters by Sir John Anderson; they were occupied by the people of London. They offer to-day, with their total lack of preparation, a shocking spectacle of crowding and discomfort and they may prove a breeding ground for disease. But they are safe from bombs, and because they are safe and free from the noise

of bombs they will be full of people, however many bunks are provided in surface shelters. Therefore one of the first needs is to make them sanitary and to turn as much tube space as is practical into proper night shelters. By converting the Holborn-Aldwych sector into a deep shelter Sir John Anderson has taken the first necessary step and incidentally admitted his past mistake in refusing deep shelters. His past policy was to treat shelters as places to drop into for half an hour during a spasmodic raid. The arguments against deep shelters used by Sir John Anderson and by the Hailey Committee have all been exploded. To argue that it would take the public too long to reach the protection of a deep shelter after an air raid warning looks ridiculous to-day, when 120,000 Londoners every day begin their orderly progress into the tubes by three o'clock in the afternoon.

It is no good telling the public that no material, in particular cement, is now available for building underground shelters. It is for the Government to decide how we use our considerable output of cement just as much as our output of steel or aluminium. For years past the cement ring—the Cement Makers Federation, of which the big Associated Portland Cement combine is the most powerful member—has been engaged in restricting output in order to keep up prices and profits. As late as the summer of 1939, for instance, incredible as it may seem, Associated Cement bought up a factory in Durham and closed it down. Lord Wolmer (then Chairman of the Cement Makers Federation) made a speech in the previous November deploring the "surplus capacity" in the trade. Big new plans for increasing plant were reported to have been abandoned after his speech.

Clearly the right policy now is to set up a Welfare Board which can over-ride the competing and overlapping authorities and sort out and deal with the complex problems of the homeless; to evacuate all those who have no work that necessitates their being in London; and to give every worker who remains the chance of a good night's rest in a deep shelter. There is not much time to accomplish this before bad weather and long nights increase the difficulties. Above all, we must emphasise the grave dangers of epidemics in present conditions. The threat of disease can be met by improved sanitation and other means. Widespread inoculation may prove necessary. All the dangers can be met if the "useless mouths" are moved out of London and the task of providing for those who remain is undertaken with speed and imagination.

The Pause in Egypt

The Italian invasion of Egypt still halts at Sidi Barrani, some eighty miles within the frontier. Since Marshal Graziani's army is entirely mechanised, it may seem surprising that its wheels should stand still. The explanation may be that it has to trail a pipe-line after it, to carry its water. An equally good guess is that it may be waiting till a march into the Sudan from Kassala distracts our none too numerous air force. The obscure politics of the Egyptian Kingdom add to the anxieties of our Command. The Premier, Hassan Sabry Pasha, still hesitates to declare war on Italy, as he and his predecessor had promised to do, if the country were invaded. His excuse is that the desert is not truly Egypt, which for sentiment, though not for law, means the Nile Valley. This evasion has brought about the resignation from his Cabinet of four Ministers who belonged to the Saadist party, which like its rival to the Left of it, the Wafd, calls for an instant declaration of war. The irony of this situation is that our own ruling caste had always distrusted the popular Wafd, while it relied on the Court and the so-called "Turkish" families of big landowners. As usual, it is property that inclines to temporise with Fascism, while the masses stand firm. None the less, the Prime Minister can retort that he has interned thousands of Italians and has proclaimed martial law—against whom? The more cheerful side of this position is that the Fleet and the Air Arm, by their bombardment of the Libyan port of Bardia and their patrol work, seem to have interrupted, if they have not cut, the invading army's communications with Italy. Doubtless it has reserves, but Libya's own resources can furnish little for its needs.

Mr. Keynes on the Economic Position

A financial correspondent writes: In his broadcast on Monday night Mr. Keynes had, as usual, many surprises for everybody up his sleeve. He was one of the first and certainly the foremost to warn the country against the consequences of the reckless finances of Sir John and Sir Kingsley. His plan for stifling the danger could not have been more unorthodox. Now that most people have adopted his view and demand stringent measures, he suddenly lends his great authority to reinforce optimism.

The policy of appeasement had to a large extent been based on the view that war, however fully justified, would lead to a material breakdown of organised society. Mr. Keynes showed that in spite of the losses inflicted by the ruthless total war methods of the Nazis, the material wealth of Great Britain has not diminished sensibly in the first year of the war. He might have pointed out that both the United States and ourselves have—owing to mistaken policies followed since the last war—lost more output through unemployment than the value of the whole of the accumulated capital of the country (excluding natural resources which cannot be destroyed). There is, of course, no knowing whether the Authorities have learned the lesson. But if they have, our view of the economic results of a victorious war need not be despondent.

It is not physically possible to meet more than a small proportion of the costs of war out of our accumulated wealth; it must be met by current effort. This means that current consumption must be reduced so as to set free man-power and capital for the armed forces and for war production. From this immediate angle Mr. Keynes' dicta are very much more open to contention than his long run analysis. He is still convinced that action will be necessary if a dangerous inflationary spiral is to be prevented. But—surprisingly—he maintains that up to date no considerable inflation has taken place. It is not enough that *current* income should not be spent on consumption but diverted to the State by taxes and loans, but people who have accumulated capital must be prevented from using it for purchases. And the tactics of the Chancellor in announcing but not immediately imposing a purchase tax have without a shadow of doubt had exactly this result and to a dangerous degree. In the last three months there must have been a dissipation of stocks by unequal purchases which is laying a great deal of trouble in store for us. If we then reflect that the night bombing must, in our present unorganised state, when products are stored by individual traders and not primarily with a view to safety, have a serious effect on our existing stocks, we must conclude that the validity of Mr. Keynes' view that "in the financial field nothing has happened up to date to give us excessive anxiety" depends on what he means by "financial" and by "excessive." The basic *economic* position must give rise to anxiety—not excessive but adequate anxiety. This small embattled island facing a whole continent must, if it is to prevail, put forth its maximum effort. And a maximum effort without effective economic unity is impossible. Mr. Keynes still seems to hanker after that pet of liberal economists called consumers' choice; he still thinks that a policy directed towards wages and prices, taxes and savings can solve our problem. He still dislikes rationing as a Prussian method (though he no longer regards it as a "pseudo" solution, as he did). But are all our problems, if and when we shall have mobilised all our productive strength for war, so very different from Germany's? Has a homeless man bombed out of the East End much of a choice? And if he and all his fellow victims are to be succoured, can other people's useless luxuries be indulged?

Mr. Keynes thinks that his method of deferred pay is still the best hitherto put forward. This may be questioned. The scheme elaborated among others by Dr. Kalecki in Bulletin No. 2 of the Oxford University Statistical Institute which limits expenditure and leaves people with no other choice but saving is, in my view, much more socially just and much more effective. It prevents those who have accumulated capital from flouting the will of the community by dissaving (as they have consistently done since 1925).

Until May we had not experienced much inflation. But until May we had not put our whole strength into the battle. And are we helping

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the needy and dispossessed enough? Is it not true that during all this talk about inflation our system, because it did not provide for real economic unity, has allowed thousands to go bankrupt. Total figures such as savings, deficit, etc., have a knack of veiling rather than revealing the basic social position.

Perhaps it is true that nothing has happened *financially* to give us anxiety. But after a year of war, confronted with a powerful enemy owning and looting a continent, can we say that we have built up an economic organisation which can give us the flexible strength required? Can we say that a system has been constructed which can withstand all shocks and smoothly divert men and capital to the points most threatened? The story of the East End tells a different tale.

The construction of such a system strong enough to achieve victory and strong enough to guarantee a better future after victory has been won is the task to which we must dedicate ourselves. That task is not financial.

THE DAKAR FIASCO

THERE is much explaining to do about Dakar. Well-informed press correspondents have, for weeks past, kept an eye on Dakar. "Dakar is the key," the *Sunday Times* wrote three weeks ago. It is one of the world's great ports—both for ships and aeroplanes. The tonnage entering Dakar is equal to that of Le Havre, France's second-largest port. It is the point of the Old World nearest to America, and the jumping-off place for most of the planes to South America. It is the doorway to the rich, though still insufficiently developed territories of West Africa. For France Senegal had been for many years a valuable source of manpower. It is also on our main route to the Cape. So Dakar is important in every respect. The Germans took an interest in it immediately after the French collapse. German airmen were sent to Dakar, allegedly to capture a Polish ship. The ship escaped, but the German visits continued.

Undeterred by this eager interest the Axis Powers were showing in Dakar and other parts of the French overseas possessions, the policy of the Vichy Government has for some time past consisted in proclaiming itself the guardian of "our magnificent Empire," and in concealing from the French public the designs of Rome and Berlin. It has, on these false pretences, been trying to increase its own prestige in the eyes of the disgruntled, unhappy French people. The Germans and Italians, with their tongues in their cheeks, encouraged Vichy to pose as Empire Guardian, even though, at the same time Serrano Suñer was being urged in Berlin to enter the war on the side of the Axis, and French Morocco was offered to Spain as a big *pourboire*.

In spite of this, Vichy and Berlin continued to work hand-in-hand, for they had a common enemy. This common enemy was De Gaulle. To Vichy, he was, above all, an internal enemy, who was threatening to create an anti-Vichy reaction both in the Empire, and, by contagion, in France itself. To Germany he was the man who was planning to upset the Axis plans in Africa. Vichy, Berlin, and Rome were all intensely alarmed by the adherence to the De Gaulle movement of French Equatorial Africa. There was a danger that the movement would spread to West Africa, and thence to North Africa. It had to be nipped in the bud. Though no doubt preferring to see what remained of the French navy stationed within easy reach, at Toulon, Germany authorised and, in fact, encouraged Vichy to send its three best cruisers and three destroyers to Dakar. The 35,000-ton Richelieu, though disabled, had been there since she was hit by a British torpedo.

It was known in London that some two or three weeks ago De Gaulle had left "for Africa," and the word Dakar was whispered. The news of an Anglo-French "attack" on Dakar on Monday did not come as a great surprise. But Tuesday's De Gaulle communiqué was a great disappointment, and confirmed the suspicion entertained in certain French quarters in London that the right moment for an *easy* capture of Dakar had been missed. De Gaulle's emissaries had not been received with open arms, but with shrapnel; and since in terms of the De Gaulle-Churchill agreement no Free Frenchmen would ever be expected to fight other Frenchmen, De Gaulle "withdrew his troops and ships, not wishing to be a party in a fight between Frenchmen." A noble sentiment, no doubt, but was it not also a confession of some serious miscalculation? Without the six French ships—whose crews were still smarting from the memory of Oran—plus the Richelieu, whose powerful guns, at any rate, could still act as coastal batteries even if the battleship was unseaworthy, Dakar was bound to resist. Did not De Gaulle know that half the crew of the Richelieu had been sent to an internment camp? A brilliant soldier is not often a shrewd politician.

The great mystery is why Gibraltar allowed the six French warships ever to go to Dakar. Official spokesmen in London began by suggesting that the ships were "perhaps" friendly, and were "perhaps" going to Indo-China to stiffen resistance against the Japanese. The second story was that since Vichy was not an "enemy" government, Gibraltar could not very well stop the ships. Lastly, it was said that, in case of trouble, Britain could deal with them more easily at Dakar than at Toulon. All of which pointed to an almost incredible muddle. If we and De Gaulle had gone to Dakar a fortnight ago, its capture would have been easy and presumably unattended with bloodshed. General De Gaulle was duped. He expected bouquets and was met with shrapnel. By allowing Vichy's ships to pass Gibraltar we gave Dakar to the Germans. The first offensive of the revolutionary war in Africa has failed. That is all we can say with certainty to-day, except that we cannot afford many such failures.

THE PEACE OF THE PACIFIC

THE vast reservoir of human energy that we call America moves swiftly, if it moves at all. Hardly was the auspicious arrangement completed by which the two English-speaking democracies pooled their defences in the Atlantic, when their Governments set to work to negotiate a parallel agreement for the Pacific. As Canada was included in the former, so was Australia in the latter negotiations. Provision may again be made to furnish the American fleet and air-arm with bases on British territory, and it is more than probable that Singapore will be placed at their disposal. How much more will be explicitly said, we do not know: it is likely enough that all the rest will be a significant silence. These two peoples share the instinct for improvisation and for the composition of Treaties-without-words. Henceforth it would be morally and even legally impossible for one of these two Powers to engage in active hostilities with a third Power in either of these Oceans without involving the other. There is no time-limit to this tie, but fortunately it does not seem to Americans to be an "entangling" alliance.

Whatever reticence diplomatic prudery may counsel, this arrangement aims at checking Japan as clearly as the other was directed against the Nazis. British policy during the past year has followed no clear line towards Japan. It yielded too much at Tientsin, and it closed the Burma Road. In spite of this it tried to maintain an attitude of friendliness towards China. With American co-operation it should now be possible to steer a straighter course. Appeasement never was a hopeful policy. On the plane of power-politics we have nothing to sell to Japan, so long as our Navy is engaged in the Mediterranean as well as round our coasts. We have no bargaining counters available which might serve to detach Japan from the Axis. In that case the only wise and indeed the only possible course is to face the fact of her hostility and do what we can to isolate her. The first obvious step was to do what we ought to have done in 1931, when she grabbed Manchuria—reach an understanding with the United States firm enough to check her. The next obvious step is to bring the Soviet Union and China within it. It is wildly improbable that Stalin would risk any major enterprise against Japan, but he has been a good friend to China and it would be proper to discuss with him what steps might be taken jointly to aid her. Washington has hitherto surpassed even Downing Street in its tendency to ignore the Soviet Union.

The central fact in the problem of the Pacific is that China contrives to maintain a resistance so obstinate that it engages all the resources and energies of Japan. Even if we felt no sympathy with this admirable and peaceable nation in its gallant struggle, every motive of self-interest would dispose us to aid it. For if the ambitious hands of Japan were free, she would certainly use the opportunity of the European war much more boldly than she has yet done to expand at the expense of the Western Powers. She has already made a prey of French Indo-China. With three air-bases, the chief port, the capital and the railway in her possession, the French are now merely tolerated

intruders in their own Colony. Though the Chinese have taken up strong defensive positions on their frontier with Indo-China and could stop a new Japanese invasion they cannot prevent the Japanese from using its air-ports to bomb the towns of South-Western China, including the vital terminus of the Burma Road. But that does not exhaust its strategical significance. With its island of Hainan, it controls the sea-road that leads to Singapore. But an even graver aspect of this business centres in Siam, which it is now the fashion to call Thai-land. With the help of Buddhist propaganda, Siam has for some years revolved in the Japanese orbit. She has now revived against the French colony territorial claims for which she may have some historical justification. It is widely believed in the Far East that she may be on the point of opening her frontiers to Japanese troops, or perhaps to Japanese planes. If she were to do this, the Malay States would be threatened from the North, and Singapore might share their peril.

Every previous attempt at appeasement has only stimulated the Japanese to aggression. However heavy the odds may seem against us, we gain nothing by a conscious display of weakness. If we cease to try to buy Japan we may have to face some temporary losses at Hongkong and in Shanghai, but if our bolder front means effective friendship for China from both democracies, we shall in the long run bring the Japanese to a more modest frame of mind. The Anglo-American agreement is little more than an interesting psychological symptom, if it contemplates only the dangers that may confront us both in the remote future. That future is being shaped to-day, and it is being moulded chiefly by China's resistance. If China can in the long run be subjugated, Japan will have at her disposal the vast natural resources and the limitless man-power of this vast continental region. These she would use with a minimum of delay first against the Dutch East Indies, then, it may be, against Burma (where she maintains a big Fifth Column), and finally against Australia. But if China could hurl back the invaders, not only would Japan be incapable for many a year of further aggression: it is likely that her military caste would be overthrown. It is our firm conviction that the United States and the British Commonwealth have it in their power to halt the Japanese without moving a ship or a plane. The obvious first step is to reopen the Burma Road, which we ought never to have closed. Since the French collapse, it is the only channel through which China can receive either petrol or munitions, the latter chiefly from Russia. The three months during which we undertook to close this road have nearly elapsed: public opinion has been as unanimous as it has been urgent in demanding a reversal of this humiliating surrender. But by far the more important of the means of pressure at our disposal is our ability to cut off Japan's supplies of oil. She draws every ton that she uses to bomb China's cities from British, American or Dutch sources. When Mr. Roosevelt recently laid an embargo on the export of motor-spirit, British companies stepped in to supply the aggressor's needs, and he withdrew his futile prohibition. An agreement for mutual defence against Japan is worthless, if our capitalists compete to supply her military needs. Canada all the while is pouring her nickel, copper and timber into Japanese harbours, and Australia is at pains to expand her trade with this hostile Power. These Dominions must conform their policy to the interests of the peoples who seek peace round this ocean, if they expect to enjoy Anglo-American protection. Unless we can all compel these interests to submit themselves to the common good, we deserve every jibe that Hitler has flung at our plutocracy.

WAR ADJUSTMENT

THIS week it has been announced that the Government recognise the Tubes as organised deep shelters, will provide a million bunks in surface shelters and will provide earplugs for all. These concessions to public comfort are a real step forward. But it has taken a month of aerial warfare to have them granted, and it must take considerably longer to have them implemented. The need for such concessions should have been foreseen and foreplanned in 1939. The delay in a psychological plan for London has meant a whole month of extra tiredness, anxiety and friction for nearly ten million citizens. It is useful to survey, in human terms, what has happened to London in the past month. Our problem is to adapt ourselves to the new circumstances of bombardment. Here I am discussing three aspects of this adjustment—domestic arrangements, leisure and sleep.

The speed with which people have topographically rearranged their homes, breaking the elementary tenets of British domestic life, needs no underlining. By now, most people have an absolutely regular routine for the night. Though there is a steady drift towards concentration in the safer communal shelters, this case is typical of the home readaptation in one family: Mother (50) and father (50) sleep in recess under stairs, daughters (20–25) in cupboard under stairs. All sleep on mattresses. All take a much-advertised tonic, have used ear plugs but don't like them. Mother said:

> We must sleep when we can. I go to sleep in the afternoon if I can manage it. My husband and daughters go to sleep the *moment* they've finished their evening meal. The two girls also try and have a sleep during their lunch hour and in shelters during the day. We just sleep when we possibly can.

On September 19th, in six areas of London we found practically equal division of people, a third sleeping inside their homes, a third in a shelter attached to the home, and a third in some form of communal shelter, including the Tube. If wider study confirms this distribution, it would seem that Lord Horder's committee which is surveying the problem of the communal shelter must also pay attention to the problems of private sheltering.

As the weather gets colder, the Anderson shelter problem becomes more pressing. It forces people steadily into the Tubes. Here is a report from a man whose family regularly shelters now in a North London tube station (they have given up using their Anderson):

> The third night, Tuesday, we got up there at 4.45 to find nearly the whole space at the back of the wall of both platforms occupied. We had to sleep right by the Men's Lavatory, which was horribly unhealthy. It was very damp too; and we spread newspapers about. I had one of the voluntary helpers near me, an Irishman who had fought for Ireland in the rebellion. He said he thought it very unfair that the porters, who did very little towards making the people comfortable, shared in the collection. They took half and the voluntary helpers half. The previous night they had collected 24s. in all. (I did not see a collection at all, till the night of the 19th when a man came round asking for contributions.) He said he himself did not share as he had a good job, but he felt it was unfair on some of them. There seem to be two helpers to each platform. And several people who drift about with shelter marshal (I think) written in red round their arms. A woman doctor, so somebody told me, is one of them. I do not know for sure. The lavatory consists of large buckets behind a canvas and wooden partition. The helpers put them there. They are at the end of one platform, one bucket for each sex. I have not been in, I could not face it.

As the toll of air damage gets greater people more and more want to get grouped together in a community which the private shelter does not provide. Already, the position of the solitary individual in the home is nearly unbearable—though, of course, physically he is just as well off. For instance, an insurance collector of 30, left alone by the evacuation of his mother and the absence of his father on a long job, eventually could not stand sleeping in the house by himself, and now goes regularly to the local Tube station, where he spends the night fully dressed sitting on a bench. He says:

> It takes it out of you, sleeping alone. I hardly ever go home now—only to change my clothes and wash.

He said it gave him the jitters to be alone, but he regained his courage when he was in contact with others. A lot has been said about young men sheltering in the Tubes, as if it was wrong of them. But after all, young men are at least as much social animals as old women. An actual count of people sheltering at a series of stations on Saturday night showed that only 25 per cent. were adult males, of whom about a quarter were under 30 years old.

It is worth while, at this moment in history, putting on record a simple description of one of the few deep shelters in the East End. It was not built as a shelter, but as an underground store. Here is an East End working girl's description:

> The structure is colossal, mainly of platforms and arches. The brick is so old, the place so filthy and decrepit, that it would be difficult for the best of artists to convey its ugliness on paper. First impression is of a dense block of people, nothing else. By 7.30 p.m. each evening, every available bit of floor space is taken up. Deck-chairs, blankets, stools, seats, pillows—people lying on everything, everywhere.
>
> When you get over the shock of seeing so many sprawling people, you are overcome with the smell of humanity and dirt. Dirt abounds everywhere. The floors are never swept and are filthy. People are sleeping on piles of rubbish. The passages are loaded with dirt. There is no escaping it. The arches are dank and grim—they are lighted well, until black-out time, and then all the lights on one side are put out, because the black-out arrangements are inadequate.
>
> There they sit in darkness, head of one against feet of the next. There is no room to move, hardly any room to stretch. . . .
>
> The sirens went at about 8 p.m. Lots of people were asleep, but in general it was too early for this.
>
> But already, at 8, people were beginning to cough, and this coughing spread, and lasted throughout the evening. I developed a cough and sore throat, in the early stages of the evening.
>
> Everyone there was working class. The shelter is near the dock area, and near the coloured quarters. Mostly Cockneys, but also many Jews and Indians. On the whole, the Jews lay on the right-hand side, the Cockneys in the middle, and the Indians on the left. Race feeling was very marked—not so much between Cockney and Jews, as between White and Black. In fact, the presence of considerable coloured elements was responsible for drawing Cockney and Jew together, in unity against the Indian. There were a lot

of cases of mixed marriages—in fact, it was more usual to see a mixed one, than to see husband and wife coloured. Some of the coloured people were Indian, some Negro, a few Chinese. Some of the Indians, those not occupied with girls, played cards.

The only first-aid facilities were provided by a group of men who clubbed together voluntarily; sanitation, some pails behind screens; lighting, medieval. All night long wardens patrol and act as dormitory police. Here, surely, is a new low level for urban civilisation? Yet there is really nothing else that people in that area can do. It is not the civilisation they have made, it is the one that has been prepared for them these many years past. And at least the outer sounds are muffled and there is no loneliness.

Only a small fraction of people are now using their own beds upstairs. I must say I was surprised to find a writer in the *British Medical Journal* saying: "it is far better to stay comfortably in one's bed during a warning, possibly excepting the occasions when bombs are dropping in the vicinity." Our own research shows that those who stay in bed upstairs actually have least sleep of any group, partly because they are listening for falling bombs in the vicinity.

Much has been written about sleep during the past month, but I have seen no contemporary facts. In peacetime investigations we found about 3 per cent. of people (London and Lancashire) regularly getting less than four hours sleep. On any night in the last fortnight there have never been less than 40 per cent. getting less than four hours in London. There has, however, been a slow but steady readjustment here, best indicated in the proportion (in six London areas) who get no sleep at all during typical nights since the A.A. barrage began:

Date	Percentage saying they get no sleep at all
September 12th	31 per cent.
September 15th	28 "
September 19th	24 "
September 22nd	9 "

The actual hours of sleep people are getting remain inadequate, particularly among women, who average about half as much sleep as their men. Women with children have been sleeping noticeably less than women without, and in general women have shown an almost excessive devotion to others at their own expense. Naturally, some get irritated too, for men have shown more equanimity and more adaptability to raids than their women.

For instance, this episode in a communal shelter in North London, where the C. family are among the regulars:

Mrs. C. (calling to husband asleep on divan in next cell): "Ted! Ted!"
Ed.: "Why can't you leave him be, Mum?"
Mrs. C.: "None of your business. Ted!"
Mr. C. (very sleepily): "What do you want?"
Mrs. C.: "I want to go home. D'you think you're the only one who wants a bit o' sleep. You've been sleeping all night there while I've been sitting up."
Mr. C.: "Why don't you come in 'ere then and have a lie down?"
Mrs. C.: "I want my own bed. I want a sleep."
Mr. C.: "Well, go 'ome then. Don't know what you're making a din about. You can sleep in the afternoon."
Mrs. C.: "Don't be daft."
Silence for some minutes. Then Mrs. C. wakes her husband again.
"You've been sleeping all the night. I want some sleep too, don't I? You can sleep in your dinner hour too."
Mr. C.: "Well, so can you sleep in your dinner hour. I don't take the bed to work with me, do I?"

Needless to say, working-class people are getting less sleep than middle- and upper-class people, largely for comfort reasons.

Finally, human adjustment in leisure. Here again, people have put up a remarkable show, changing the whole rhythm of shopping habits and meal-times. But not all adjustments have been so good. Cinemas, music-halls, billiard saloons, social clubs, dance-halls, which serve millions of Londoners, find they are serving many less to-day. Pubs sell more spirits, but trade is earlier, quicker, less social. All the places of organised leisure (surveyed in three widely different London areas) find a great change in the times at which people come, and a great decrease. Moreover, there has been a decrease in use of libraries (except 2*d.* libraries) in most of the areas investigated; a decrease in church-going, even where there has been little evacuation; and a large majority of people now say that they never go out in the evenings at all. Interest in radio and press have both gone down in London in the past fortnight. Consequently, much more time than ever before is being spent negatively at home—perhaps more time than ever before in human history. Yet few people have found new occupations so far. On the other hand, a large proportion, unused to sitting about in a family group at home in the basement or in the shelter, now "do nothing," except talk (largely about the noises) and listen (for the noises). Extraordinarily few new occupations are recorded in the large number of families and shelters studied in detail. Knitting, darts and minor home repairs are three main booms. Here a little propaganda, a few words from Mr. Churchill on our duty to ourselves and our country, might have an important result. Many feel that it is somehow disloyal or improper to carry on with normal, flippant activities, when all this danger and death is raging outside. The effect is bad.

If the position is allowed to drift, we are bound to get further developments in the dislocation described by Ritchie Calder last week. This confusion is not *only* due to the confusion and lack of co-ordination between authorities. To deal with that, with the immediate problems and past mistakes, we need a Welfare Board, as Mr. Calder suggests. But we need also to go further and to *look ahead*. Welfare is something additional, sedative, supplementary. We need now a group, a special branch of Government, to deal with the whole human problem. It is a permanent problem (I hope), because people will always behave irrationally and rationally, be brave and frightened, sensible and stupid, careful and careless, all at once. *Many* of the problems of London to-day derive from this. A huge proportion of those who have evacuated the East End are not those bombed or very nearly bombed, but those living on the periphery of "incidents." Mental upset is not distributed on a "logical," radial pattern round the explosion. Many London problems come from the attitude of people to authority, to official instructions, to fantasies about danger as well as sensible fears. To cope with all this, we need a wide-awake unit, composed of ordinary, sensible people (not knights or professors). Their job: to foresee the difficulties caused by the human factor. At present bricks and wires, transport and fire, have complete priority over all humans. But the time has come when we must see that mental upsets and social conflicts can be more serious than destroyed property or physical casualties. It should not be possible for London to be robbed of sleep for a month, and still no "sleep policy" put forward by Government. Perhaps we need a whole new Ministry. The Ministry of Everyday. Certainly, we neglect the human problems, likely to get greater through the winter, to our peril and to Hitler's pleasure. He aims at hearts and minds and superstitions just as much as at hospitals and factories and ships.

T. HARRISSON

A LONDON DIARY

ONE compensation to-day is the extraordinary conversation that one has wherever one goes. England was never so sociable before. Railway carriage conversations are perhaps the best: two begin talking and soon everyone joins in. The other day I found myself sitting next to a carpenter employed in a hospital in the East End. He was full of shrewd observation and telling incident. He described the incredible tenacity of the East-Ender; an adjoining street had been almost totally destroyed; like many others it is bombed almost every day. It is now only inhabited by an elderly and dignified workman and his wife, who resist all persuasion to move. They prefer to live among the ruins. They explain that it is their home; they won't move for Hitler and they would rather die there, if necessary, than live as strangers elsewhere. Then a woman sitting next joined in. She had a family of children. All the houses round hers had been knocked out and she was taking them down to the country. She was quite cheerful, though she had seen horrors that she never expected to see in her lifetime. Then a young R.E. Lance-Corporal began to speak. When we asked him what he was doing, he explained very modestly that he spent his time digging out time bombs. He smiled when he said that there were almost some good moments when the pickaxe hit the bomb before one got it out. "We always give some cheers then," he said. The other person in the carriage was a quiet man in the far corner, who had so far not contributed. I thought perhaps his experiences had been comparatively trivial and that he was shy of talking. Suddenly he started to talk. His was the most exciting story of all. He worked in a patrol boat on the river and had been down near the docks when the Germans came over on that first big Saturday raid. He described their arrival in relays and how, unopposed, they systematically set the wharves on fire, and what it had been like to be on the water when the bombs shook across from shore to shore and the flames made the river look like a blazing lake. Until a few months ago every one of my travelling companions would have been sought after to give interviews to the press. Any one of them was headline news in himself.

* * *

John Pudney had an interesting article in the *News Chronicle* last week deploring the fact that he had not kept a diary during this war. He hoped that some Pepys was really doing the job. Now the same

point must have occurred to many of us, but a good deal of the interest of Pepys lies in his intimate account of a period about which our information is scrappy; we have, for instance, no further detailed accounts of the Plague and of the Great Fire. To-day innumerable details are published. Everything is recorded by the camera, over the wireless, in the newspapers. Pepys lived when comparatively few people could read and write and very few systematically described their experiences. To-day thousands of people are recording events; Mass Observation is piling up an immense accumulation of fact; the historian's trouble, if the records survive, will be to select from a mountain of material. What would Thucydides have done if the Parthenon had been packed with documents and if his readers were already surfeited with photographs of the dwindling force of Athenian hoplites at Syracuse? Yet I think Pudney is right about the duty of keeping a diary. Records of fact, however detailed, do not recall psychological experience. If you have just been missed by a bomb the notion that you will forget what it felt like in a few weeks' time sounds absurd, and yet you do forget. To record emotion you must write in the first period of tranquillity after the experience.

* * *

The other day I met A who took me off to keep a tea appointment with B on the fourth floor of Peter Robinson's. We arrived to find a substantial chunk of Peter Robinson's littering Oxford Circus. But Lewis's is the most spectacular. It stands to-day like the ruins of a Greek temple; a few wide arches and little more. On the way back to my flat (which I had not seen for several days), I wondered whether it remained standing. Bombs had fallen all round it. Supposing it has gone, I said to myself, does it really matter? What shall I have to lose? A great many books; some of which I value highly. But most of the political books are now out of date and can be referred to elsewhere. It would be a nuisance to lose my clothes, but if my ancient dress suit goes on a bonfire, who cares? I don't expect to have much need of boiled shirts and dinner jackets. I have a liking for some of the furniture and pictures. But the only thing that really matters when I get down to bed-rock is an unpublished MS., and that may not really matter much to anyone but myself. How unimportant is property as long as you have a salary which will enable you to use somebody else's property, either in an hotel or elsewhere! And how all-important it is if you have no regular income! But the real moral is that it is fatal to go on considering this war as an interruption of normal life. In that case everything seems intolerable; the inconvenience of the telephone that continuously rings the engaged signal instead of the dialling tone; the inconvenience of delayed posts and the hours spent on station platforms or traffic diversions. But if you think of this as a new kind of world altogether and do not expect anything to be normal, life to those who have not suffered personal bereavement and who have a job, may be tolerable and even exciting. The first condition of life, I am sure, is no more to expect anything to be comfortable or normal than you would if you started out on a voyage of adventure in an unexplored country. And that, you see, is exactly what we are doing. The country ahead certainly looks grim enough.

* * *

Families have already moved into empty houses in the West End. One dirty long-unoccupied house north of the Park was over-filled with several families: nine adults were put into one room, which they scrubbed and polished and made habitable. Then a family who had been moved from a modern flat (part of a rehousing scheme in Stepney) were put into an exquisite and expensive house in a West End square. They took a visitor round and showed off the palatial bathroom, remarking casually "This, you see, is what we are used to."

* * *

Down in Devonshire, a friend remarked to me, we were forgotten by the war, forgotten so completely that during the space of a week I heard and saw nothing to suggest that we were at war. Forgotten, too, apparently, by everybody else, including the Board of Education. Nevertheless Miss Smith, who has been evacuated from East London with twenty children, continues to teach her evacuees, reinforced by three locals and ranging from fourteen to four and a half years old, in the single room which is all that the village school can provide. No superior supervises her, no inspector visits her. Except for punctual payment of her salary she might be marooned on an island, the sole cultivator of her little oasis of education in the wilderness of rural Devon. In the village inn the local fisherman told me that if the Germans were to try to invade this country he wouldn't eat fish again for five years. "Why not?" I asked. "Every single one of 'em would be poisoned with Jerries." His remark left me pensive.

In the sheltered existence which, in the grimmest sense, we may be condemned to live in the coming months, we shall certainly need all possible provision for saving and sustaining any social pleasures and cultural activities. Otherwise we shall really become cave-men again. Such a body as C.E.M.A. (Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts) should have great opportunities, but it will need far greater resources than it possesses if it is really to serve the national need. It showed its quality recently by sending first-rate concerts to internees and refugees: this was one civilised gesture of goodwill amid the official blunders that did us so much harm. Formerly C.E.M.A. kept out of London and the big towns, concentrating on the industrial areas: it has guaranteed, for example, two tours of "Old Vic" companies; one of them, led by Dame Sybil Thorndike and Mr. Lewis Casson, started to play Shakespeare in the Welsh valleys this week. But what about London, which can now fairly claim to be a devastated area? C.E.M.A. is coming to town in order to relieve the blankness of a huge city with scarcely a theatre open and very little music, especially at week-ends. It is starting emergency concerts at very popular prices at the Wigmore Hall immediately. There will be matinees this Saturday (Cyril Smith and John McKenna), and on Sunday (Arthur Catterall's String Orchestra). If supported, these will be continued. Meanwhile, there is more talk of lunch-hour activities to add to the National Gallery Concerts and Mid-day Ballet at the Arts Theatre Club. An hour of Shakespeare with leading players in their favourite scenes and groups of Elizabethan songs is one suggestion. Such things, however welcome, are but fragments of a policy. Has the Government any ideas about "winning the winter"?

* * *

This story was told to me by a Chinese friend—otherwise I should not dared to tell it. In a street of a certain character (as a certain kind of journalist would call it) an A.R.P. Warden noticed an imperfect black-out. He said to a woman who answered his knock: "There's a Chink in that room up there." "No," she said. "it's not a Chink: it's a Japanese gentleman."

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to William Woodcock.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

The Ministry of Information has asked news-reel proprietors not to refer to Italians as "ice-cream merchants," because so many worthy people of other nations come within that category, but it has no objection to the term "wops."—*Confectionery paper.*

The Rev. J. Norton suggested that the Germans were sparing breweries and maltings from bombing because if drinking continued at the present rate we would lose the war.—*South Wales Echo.*

Whilst I understand, though I do not share, the feelings of those who are anti-Japanese, I fail to comprehend how any sensible British subject can be pro-Chinese.—Sir Francis Lindley, Ambassador to Tokio 1931-4, in *The Tablet.*

By the way, that Home Guard officer with the D.S.O. and bar whose message to the civilians I printed here last week has now inaugurated a mess dinner. The idea is to get the fellows together, and it is doing a lot of good. They wear denim uniform over a boiled shirt and a butterfly collar.—Charles Graves in *The Daily Mail.*

A CAROL FOR THE DAY

ST. MICHAEL and all agents
Are happy to announce
That Michael follows Carol
As Carol follows mounts,
But Carols follow Michaels
And Michaels follow Carols
Until you lose your counts.

So here's a little Carol
That's had a little fall,
It's still a living Carol—
Perhaps. . . . But after all
You can't dismount a Carol,
You cannot mount St. Michael,
Without a Carol's fall.

TERENCE HEYWOOD

FARMERS SEEK KNOWLEDGE

THE fact that the title to this article reads as "news" puts the situation in a nutshell. Justly or unjustly, the farming community has been branded with the reputation of being contemptuous of knowledge hitherto, and in the minds of too many the farmer stands out as a figure that is almost a caricature of ignorance, a gaitered, side-whiskered John Bull that does not even remove the straw from his mouth to mumble stage asides about "turmuts." Before this war it was all too easy to sell any news story to the more urban-minded organs of the press provided it portrayed the farmer in a semi-comic light. A particularly favourite line was the farmer as a Rip Van Winkle bemused by the new power electrical and agricultural engineers had thrust into his mutton-fisted hands. These stories invariably included the phrase "down on the farm," rather as if one were describing a visit to a distant colony of segregated imbeciles.

Why is it that news editors, who are not the least perceptive of men and are trained to be aware of the world that surrounds them, could be induced to accept this picture of the farmer so readily? Was it true or untrue? The answer, like most answers in agriculture, is not straightforward. There are not less than 250,000 farmers, ranging from the business-man farmer who may direct from the farm office an enterprise with a yearly turnover running into several tens of thousands of pounds, down to the remote family farm, cut off from all that we now call civilisation, where the cash return is less than the weekly wage of a farm labourer. There are upland farms in Wales where, at this very moment, the sound of the threshing flails is to be heard because no threshing machine can be dragged up the rough tracks that lead to them. In such a wide range of conditions it would be surprising if knowledge flourished everywhere with equal zest, especially in homes where the daily round is hard manual work through most of the hours of daylight; especially among the smaller, peasant type which all over the world is instinctively suspicious of "book learning."

But also this conception of farmers is a mirror of the nation's attitude towards the industry. So many regard it as really rather a nuisance. The land is there, it would look rather bad to let our "picturesque" countryside go to rack and ruin, it would spoil the look of the place at week-ends. Then there's the rural vote, of course, that counts for quite a lot collectively. And yet it would be so much easier if there were no agricultural problem at home and one just imported the stuff in exchange for textiles and manufactured goods and so on, with all the added perquisites that arise from shipping, insuring and financing the deal. If only those queer people from the country were not quite so importunate. . . .

But this only starts the vicious circle. The nation's attitude to farming has given farmers a sense of inferiority, of feeling that they are the poor relation who must be kept alive with doles to preserve family appearances and prevent unpleasantness. Just enough to keep him quiet. And, quite apart from the fact that this state of mind is not very fertile soil for efficiency to flourish, it has caused agriculture to dwell far too much on its failures and not enough on its successes, to stress always the "hard luck" stories. So it has come about that farmers themselves are partly responsible for the distorted view that many have of them and their industry.

For it is a distorted view. Farming to-day can probably boast more efficiency than any other large industry made up of a number of small, scattered units; more than is to be found in the building trade, for example. Two years ago Mr. J. M. Keynes, in an article in the *Times*, demonstrated that whereas factory productivity rose by about 5 per cent. per head between 1924 and 1930, and by at least 20 per cent. between 1930 and 1935, yet agriculture had done best of all industries and raised its output per head by some 40 per cent. between 1924 and 1934, with the greater part occurring in the last five years. There is evidence that in the last twelve months this progress has been accelerated. Output per farm has risen, especially when the production of more home-grown feeding stuffs is taken into account; and yet it has been achieved with no increase worth mentioning in the number of hands employed, and with some of the younger skilled workers called up and less expert workers taking their place. The desire for knowledge is growing. That has been a common experience among members of the district committees who have been going round this year directing the ploughing up campaign and the farm survey. "Last year," one of them said to me, "we were received on many farms practically with brickbats. This time they seemed quite pleased to see us. I think it was that we were able to give them a few tips last year when we were talking to them about the ploughing up. I suggested to some that they might care to come and have a look round my place on a Sunday, and some of them came. You see, they'll take it from chaps they feel are like themselves, and I must say I've noticed a difference, going round this time, in some of the farms that seemed past praying for a year ago."

Then also the Ministry of Agriculture has, so to speak, come down to earth much more during this war. Instead of producing leaflets and waiting for farmers to write and ask for them, they have lately made an interesting experiment in "taking Whitehall to the farmer." They sent some of their people round on market day in several districts, displaying the leaflets and other literature in the market on a table on trestles. In every case their visits had a most heartening reception. At 39 markets, including some of the smallest in Britain, 25,000 free leaflets have been asked for by farmers and over £150 worth of priced publications were sold. No leaflet was given away except on request; no leaflet has been found lying on the ground at the end of the day. The only criticism has been: Why didn't they do it before?

The Ministry has also been running a silage campaign in the last few weeks, not exactly blessed by the weather. Yet in spite of this the 1,000 or so demonstrations, mostly in fairly remote places, have in practically every case attracted as many visitors as the demonstrators could conveniently deal with. The demonstrators, like the leaflets, were decentralised and sent out into the countryside. Here, I think, the Ministry has stumbled upon one of the fundamental facts of rural psychology, namely, that the country person takes things in through his eyes rather than through his ears. They like to *see* the thing being done. I had interesting proof of this in the West Country, a few months ago. The chief demonstrator for four counties told me that nearly every farmer he met seemed to have obtained the written advice about silage making, but almost every farmer had waited until he could show it to someone skilled in the art, and he showed it with the remark: How do I do this?

These wartime experiments seem to point the way to a revision of the technique of agricultural education. A small minority, perhaps 10 per cent., study the excellent but slightly highbrow reports and treatises that go out from the various centres of agricultural education. But the knowledge does not get home at the very spot where it is most needed, to those at the other end of the scale, who could not, even if they would, translate the written word into practical deeds on their own farms. It is true we have an admirable system of Agricultural Organisers in the counties, and that these are practical men who have won the farmers' confidence. But even in peacetime many were overworked and they simply had not the time to get round to the places where their services were most required. There was the natural tendency for them to deal first with those who sought their aid and these, of course, tended to be the righteous who had little need of repentance. If agriculture is to attain its maximum of efficiency, there is little doubt that the wartime system of personal contacts will have to be maintained and extended after the war.

Here again the opportunity has arrived and must be seized. Irksome as the reduced quantities of imported feeding stuffs may be, it is a blessing in disguise for agriculture in so many ways. It is leading to better farming of our land, and in the process it is turning cowkeepers into farmers. There is no great art in pouring bought rations in at one end and selling the milk and eggs produced by them at the other. One farmer before the war confessed that he made £2,000 a year by doing this and only working a couple of hours a day. He was not really a farmer, as he admitted. He was, in effect, a processer of raw materials. But now that it is necessary to use the plough again and to use the land, now that crops must be planned and cultivated to the best advantage and the ways of the soil, plants and animals understood, the old arts of husbandry are being revived and a new chapter in farming is opening in which modern knowledge and the ancient wisdom can come together in a fertile alliance. It would not be surprising if the exigencies of wartime farming prove to be the great stimulus in the reopening of the agricultural mind, that to many townsmen seems dull, but only because it is temperamentally interested in different things.

But if this is to be done, if agriculture is to stake out its claim to the support and respect of the people in the towns, it must respect itself. In these days of go-getting, it is surely bad policy to present oneself always as the poor, down-trodden relation that invariably loses money in everything he ventures. Certainly it cannot be a policy calculated to gain the practical sympathy of bank managers. The industry has cried "stinking fish" too long. It has a far better record than that. Let us no longer go cap in hand asking to be

allowed to live: rather let us proclaim our achievements to the world and illustrate with facts and figures how much greater those achievements might be if the potentialities of the land, in terms of life as well as of food and money, were fully realised. Our job is to convince the community that agriculture is an essential and valuable part of its existence. How is this the more likely to be done: by presenting farming as an industry that has made great strides in efficiency and can do better if it is given the chance; or by presenting it as a down-at-heel remittance man, fated to be unlucky whatever he tries? It should not be necessary to debase ourselves in order to get justice. Nor is it, in this world, the surest way of getting justice.

L. F. EASTERBROOK

THE RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX

Four Saadist members of the Egyptian Cabinet . . . withdrew . . . on the ground that Sabry Pasha's Government had failed . . . to declare war on Italy when Italian troops advanced on Sidi Barrani.—*Times*, September 24th.

If ever invasion were mooted
In Egypt's historical land,
Her sons would forthwith be recruited
And stand firm to the last inch of sand;
For each rape she would wrest satisfaction
And, though late information is scant,
No Power is more eager for action
Throughout the Levant.

The forces of Count Graziani
May be said to invade in a sense,
But the landmark of Sidi Barrani
Is no outpost of Egypt's defence.
We cannot escape the suggestion
That the desert to westward is wide,
And on this geographical question
The Pashas divide.

Though Egypt from time immemorial
No foot of her soil has resigned,
The scope of her bounds territorial
Has not been exactly defined,
Though not for one instant retarded
By the strength and the speed of the foe
She asks of each region bombarded—
Is it Egypt or no?

The battleground chosen by Wavell
May miss the frontier by a mile,
And an action protective though naval
May be reckoned too far from the Nile;
So we wait the official description
And peer across deserts immense
To glimpse in the darkness Egyptian
The Sphinx on the fence.

SAGITTARIUS

TO BED

It seems strange nowadays that there was once a time when one did not appreciate—when one even despised—the pleasure of going to bed. Perhaps the reason was that in our childhood our elders made going to bed seem not a pleasure but a duty. It is true that they tried to cajole us with talk about beauty sleep, but I do not think we ever believed them on this point. We suspected rather a trick on their part. If going to bed early conferred, as they maintained, not only beauty, but health, wealth and wisdom, how did it happen that our elders did not take the necessary steps to become healthy, wealthy, wise and beautiful? Was it not likely that they were merely using a dodge to get rid of us in order that they themselves might be able to sit up late in peace and for pleasure? Certainly we envied them few things more than their right to sit up.

Apart from this, excitable children are seldom more wakeful than when the moment arrives for going to bed. A game or a book is just approaching its highest peak of enjoyment. To leave it is almost a physical wrench. To go and lie down in the dull and duteous darkness of the bedroom savours of punishment. I am sure no ordinary child ever went to bed voluntarily. At least, I did not. Dr. Watts wrote a poem about the voice of the sluggard complaining that he had been waked too soon. If I had had the poetic gifts of Dr. Watts at the age of nine, I would have written a counter-poem giving the point of view of the child who complained with equal justice that he had been sent too soon to bed.

All through boyhood and youth I continued to dislike the effort of going to bed. Nature protested against it, indeed, for, when I did go to bed, I was often unable to sleep till sunrise. Morning after morning during spring and summer I leaned out of my bedroom window and watched the colours of the dawn. Morning after morning I listened to the alarmed cries of the newly awakened birds. Occasionally I did not take the trouble to go to bed at all, but sat up all night in conversation with someone as foolish as myself. And even to haggard eyes the spectacle of morning coming over the sea at Portrush was well worth seeing.

The truth is, I suffered from a mixture of antisomnia and insomnia which might have kept me a wreck if I had not suffered equally from late-morning hypnosis. Once having fallen asleep, I could, if I had been permitted, have outlasted the record of the Sleeping Beauty. How often at night have I given instructions for water to be thrown over me as the only means of waking me, and how often, when the water was thrown, have I leaped furiously from my bed and chased the thrower out of the room and down the stairs and gone back to bed again! Still, to be a sluggard was my only medicine. By this alone were the ravages of insomnia healed.

As for involuntary insomnia, no one, however antipathetic to bed, has ever pretended to enjoy it. In later life, however, I met a friend who endured long spells of it and who claimed to have become comparatively indifferent to it. He was of the opinion that the worst thing about insomnia was worrying about not being able to sleep, and that, if one ceased to worry, one could get along with a comparatively small amount of sleep. He quoted his doctor's statement that half the virtue of being in bed consisted not in being asleep, but in lying flat. I do not know how far this theory has the support of medical science, but, if it is partly true, it is worth disseminating in these weeks of noisy nights.

Even if with increasing years I had not gradually come to realise the pleasure of going to bed, these noisy nights would have converted me. For the first time in my life I have slept on a mattress on a scullery floor, and, after that, getting into a real bed is like lying down on rose-leaves. One begins to understand why those wise men, the poets, have written so many pretty things about sleep. But to be blissful, it must be sleep in a real bed—sleep on springs. There is a special sweetness in sleep after a raid is past. Life is for the moment all clear. One sinks to rest like a tired child in a cradle. The touch of the sheets is more than silken as one drifts into the paradise of unconsciousness.

I enjoyed such a sleep one night during the week-end when the village in which I was staying was bombed for some unknown reason. In such an innocent part of the world the sound of the first bomb was scarcely credible. Yet the drone of an aeroplane circling in the sky overhead suggested that somebody was looking for something or other. I see that it is denied that aeroplanes ever move in circles, but the local searchlight men say that they had to turn their instrument round and round, like a Spanish mule plodding round and round a well in the dry country, in order to follow the movements of the bomber overhead. I opened the door to look for the plane, but was forced back by a deluge of rain. Almost at that moment an explosion shook the house. Then another and another. "They're probably two miles away," I said self-deceivingly, for a member of the Home Guard had told me that the blast from an explosion could blow a man down at two miles distance.

For an hour or so, there were no more explosions. Towards midnight I turned on the wireless which was recording a reading by Miss Edith Evans in the "And So To Bed" series. She had hardly begun when a bomb seemed to whistle over the roof and exploded somewhere unpleasantly near. Then came a deafening explosion—well, not quite deafening—that set the house rocking on its feet and put the lights out for a spasm. That, I thought, could not be more than a quarter of a mile away. From the wireless came Miss Evans's voice, saying: "Here is a recipe that, I think, will make you laugh." How sane it sounded after the insanity of that man-made thunderclap! The house settled on its foundations again. Night noises ceased. And the calm voice of the midnight announcer took their place. I had a "hunch" that everything was over for the night, and the peace of bed was so delicious after that brief reign of pandemonium that sleep seemed all the sweeter for what had gone before.

Most of the villagers, too, must have enjoyed sound post-raid sleep, for most of them were in good fettle in the morning, when luckily they found that scarcely any damage had been done. Those to whom

the bombs fell nearest were almost boastful. I found to my surprise that the bomb that had rocked the cottage had fallen at the top of the garden on the other side of the hedge just thirty yards from the house. Plunging into heavy clay, it burst a water-main and flung up great sods of earth, leaving a well in the crater, but it did not even break a window in the cottage. A neighbour told me that he had been sitting on a couch when the explosion took place, and that he and the sofa had been lifted two feet into the air like a mystic in a state of levitation. An old labourer who keeps seven cats and buys bars of chocolate for them said that all seven cats had leaped on his chest at the sound of the explosion. The farm-house opposite had its chimney-stack damaged by blast, and a cageful of budgerigars was blown open without injury to the birds. (Two of his canaries, however, died of shock.) His dog-kennel was blown twelve yards along the ground, but the dog was unharmed. I could not have believed, without strong evidence, that so many bombs could fall on a village, several of them close to houses or caravans, without so much as hurting a human being's little finger or that ordinary men, women and children should wake up so cheerful into the next day's sunshine after so nerve-racking an experience. The small evacuees were playing football on the common with gusto. No want of sleep showed on their faces. Great is the resilience of childhood.

Still I think that, when all these night noises are things of the past, millions of those who survive will be conscious as never before of the pleasure of going to bed under peaceful stars. Parents will bring up their children to look on bed, not as a place to which duty calls, but as something more desirable than sweetmeats. To be kept up late will be regarded as a bitter punishment, like being kept in after school. And the princess on her feather-bed will no longer be plaintive but will at last be ecstatically happy. Y. Y.

THE SWASTIKA

FOR us in these latter days the Swastika has gained a sinister meaning. It led the mob in many a pogrom: it waved over the bonfire of the books that opened Hitler's reign: it is the marking on the wings of the mechanical birds of prey that sweep upon our cities. But, as several recent letters have reminded us, never before and nowhere else in the wide world has the Swastika carried these evil associations. It is widely used in India in ceremonies of benediction and consecration. The Buddhist missionaries who bore it thence to China and Japan felt that its meaning fitted their gentle religion. What was it before the Nazis distorted it and made it the militant symbol of their racial pride and racial hate?

To begin with, it was almost certainly a Cross, as its names in the French and German languages recognise (*croix gammée* and *Hackenkreuz*). Archaeologists have discovered it in Troy and Crete in the ruins of civilisations that flourished a thousand years and more before the Crucifixion. The simple equal-limbed Cross, of which it is in all likelihood a development, must be the oldest and the most widely diffused of all religious symbols. I have seen it in the deep cave of Mas d'Azil under the French Pyrenees, where in the latter phases of the Old Stone Age the men who lived by hunting bisons and wild ponies were beginning to evolve what looks like a pictographic script. I saw it again in the buried cities of the Indus Valley, which had an elegant civilisation contemporary with that of Sumeria. I have lived under it, where it lies cut in chalk on the Chiltern Hills, at Bledlow and Whiteleaf, close to a group of barrows, hut-circles, and forts beside the green road over which men trudged along the ridges to sacrifice at Stonehenge. This universal Cross, older than any heresy or schism, was man's first symbol for the Heavens. Ancient though it be, we must not call it primitive. Long centuries of observation and manual work lay behind it. For it meant not the unbroken blue of the sky one perceives, but the firmament which thought has broken into quarters. Each cardinal point in the heavens was linked with many things on earth—perhaps with everything—with a prevailing wind for example, and, of course, with a season. The cross dates from the age when the religion of nature venerated the stars and the moon. These were the pioneering days of agriculture, and in more than one of the early civilisations the focus of the heavenly influences that governed the seasons, the crops and the whole life of men was the Great Bear. A subsequent Reformation, which had like recent movements of the kind its political and military aspects, introduced the Sun-Cult, but still the Cross was honoured—and used. The four quarters had, meanwhile, acquired their deities or guardian angels, notably the four Horuses in Egypt. They marked off the abode of the dead, penetrated the ritual of mummification, and in China and Mexico, as in Egypt, invaded the human body, so that each of its organs fell into one heavenly quarter or another. The Cross, it will be realised, was no mere symbol. It was the ground plan of an ordered universe.

But why was the Cross elaborated into a Swastika? That Sanskrit word, by the way, is used both for the simple Cross and its more complicated form. Religion in those days was nothing if not practical. It was social magic. Men had no assurance that the Great Bear, or, in a reformed and more enlightened age, the sun, would without encouragement continue by their revolutions to make the seasons. Something had to be done about it. What, in fact, was done, by way of sympathetic magic, fills half of Frazer's dozen tomes and a whole library of other men's books. The essential thing was by human agency to impart to them a circular motion. You might, as German peasants lately did, encourage the sun by rolling a blazing wheel or barrel down a hill. You might light candles or bonfires. But perhaps the most widely approved method was to dance in a ring or to walk in a processional circle. It had to be done, of course, the right way round, with the sun, or, as moderns say, clockwise. But since the processions of the seasons and the sun's round brought life to crops and herds and wealth to man, these ceremonies became a general means of ensuring fertility and luck—or rather perhaps the blessing of Nature with which one danced in step. The device could work both ways. Miss Margaret Murray has described the fertility dances of the witches round a standing stone. These rites preserved the oldest of European faiths through centuries of Christian persecution (*The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*, p. 130). But she has also described how malevolent witches sowed tares in an enemy's field, while they danced round it from left to right, against the sun (p. 171). Mr. D. A. Mackenzie in his rich storehouse of scholarship, *The Migration of Symbols* (p. 128), tells how as a boy he saw an elderly Highlander circumambulating his own cottage solemnly three times "for luck." When he had done it, he sat down content, saying, "That will bring me what I want."

The Swastika is the sign of this magical circular movement. Look at it: it visibly turns round—an effect intensified in its curved varieties. But we must never forget that there are two Swastikas: one looks to the left with curses, the other to the right with blessings. In the superb collection of illustrations that adorns Mr. Mackenzie's book, there is one from Troy which shows within a circle a Swastika above the Great Bear. It seems to be a spell that will ensure the revolution of this constellation, and with it the beneficent march of the seasons. To call it a "sign" is an inadequate description. One guesses that it may have originated in these round dances or circular ritual movements. Ritual, as Robertson Smith was the first to insist, precedes mythology and cosmology. First man danced and then he wondered why. But one must not think of the Swastika as a mere sign in a primitive dance-notation. It was a prayer that ensured its own fulfilment. To paint it on a Trojan pot or to carve it on a Polynesian canoe was to ensure their luck. On a Greek vase it often indicated the sanctity of an animal, much as the solar halo indicated a saint in later ages. When a priest wore it embroidered on his robe, it bestowed on him the divinity of the god he represented. You may see it on a Chinese statue of the Buddha, his godhead manifest. It may have protected bales of merchandise from theft, for like the Cross it brought down Heaven to earth. It was the sky-world, not static, as the Cross represented it, but moving and dynamic, divinity in action, charged with blessings.

Who first drew down the heavens to earth in this revolving Cross? The question has not been answered yet with certainty, but some scholar's spade may solve it to-morrow. In the negative sense the speculations from which Hitler drew his shoddy creed were not mistaken. The distribution of the Swastika is all but world-wide, but there is a singular group of exceptions. It was unknown, up to a relatively late period, in Egypt, Sumeria and Babylon, though the pre-dynastic Egyptians had the equal Cross. What the solar cult used in Egypt was not the Swastika but the winged disk. This holds of the entire area of the great river cultures, and neither the Jews nor any other Semitic people knew the Swastika. To that extent the Nazis are not mistaken. But to conclude that the "Aryans" (meaning people who spoke an Indo-European tongue) either originated this symbol, or have any special right of ownership in it, is the merest nonsense. It was popular in the early civilisations of the Eastern Mediterranean, in Minoan Crete, in Troy and Cyprus. It occurs on pottery all over the Aegean. From these sunny and genial cultures it passed to the Dorian builders of the Mycenaean Age and with much else to the art and faith of Hellenic times. The Hittites, who traded with Crete, were fond of it, but, as Professor Sayce guessed, they may

have brought it with them into Asia Minor. It was at home in the Caucasus. A single specimen has been found at Susa on a painted vase that belongs to the earliest proto-Elamite period—long before the Aryan Persians penetrated Iran. This may be the oldest Swastika as yet unearthed. All the peoples of Northern and Western Europe used it in antiquity, and the Celts were especially devoted to it. It lingered far into Christian times in Ireland and evolved on stones in Scotland some elegant and elaborate decorated forms. The probability is that it reached these Aryans through one or more of the frequented roads of cultural diffusion that carried the enlightenment of the River Civilisations and the Mediterranean to the backward North. In short, there is not a trace of evidence to suggest that the early Nordic peoples invented it—or anything else. They were pupils and borrowers until the other day, when they emerged from a prolonged adolescence with the printing press as the first fruit of their genius. The Lapps, it should be noted, have a very odd and original form of the Swastika which they cannot have borrowed in this shape from their Nordic neighbours.

But the strangest chapter in the history of the Swastika tells of its popularity in pre-Columbian America. It was not only the civilised Mayas and Aztecs who used it: it had spread to the wilds of Brazil. By one or both of the two obvious channels the Old World may have bestowed it on the New. The Pueblo and Plains Indians built an elaborate mythology round it, and had even evolved a form of it, known as the "whirling logs," that was all their own. In their paintings it is shown with three deities standing stiffly on the ends of each of its four arms. Like every living idea the Swastika could change and grow and develop. But always it meant the divine and universal heavens, that revolve to bring seed time and harvest to red men and brown and to pale-faces as well. When the Nazis stole it, they wronged the Catholic faith of all mankind.

H. N. BRAILSFORD

BOMBS ON THE BOURGEOIS

THERE are eleven of us. Five men and six women. The women consist of two mildly endowed spinsters, two widows and two wives. The men have all earned their own living, partly through succeeding to small provincial businesses of the family type, partly through entering professions in which competition is not keen, and a modest living is assured, if you get the right start. Each of us has about £250 nett, after paying income tax. We are all over seventy, and all waiting for death, though we never mention it, and never go to church for fear we should be brutally reminded of its approach by some tactless priest. We all dress for dinner, and cling to our past gentility by living in a private hotel at a weekly cost of £3 3*s*. per head, which leaves us a narrow margin for clothes, club membership, restrained smoking, a bad month at the penny bridge table, and a very occasional whiskey and soda. We escape tips, because we have been fortunate enough to unearth a private hotel operated by three spinsters in partnership. They do their own cooking, waiting, and chamber-maiding; and everybody knows one does not tip ladies. A box of chocolates at Christmas, maybe: more would be an insult.

We have passed through a very bad time this last year or two. Munich's sequels knocked us all off our perches. True blue to our now somewhat arthritic marrowbones, we have always voted Conservative, even in municipal elections; we always distrusted Churchill; too brainy, you know; and a fellow with brains never has balance, eh? We hailed Munich as the supreme political achievement of all time. We acclaimed Neville Chamberlain as a kind of hybrid between the younger Pitt and the archangel Gabriel. We only wished our other darling, Baldwin, could have enjoyed Chamberlain's golden opportunity to snatch fame from the parsimonious treasury of destiny. The war and Chamberlain's subsequent sidestep into obscurity shook us.

I am not quite sure why we are still here. Cliff House is not only in the south-east, but it is near definitely invadable beaches. Most petty *rentiers* like ourselves departed long ago for Cheltenham or Exmouth. Our remaining may have been pure stupidity. We were slow to foresee the collapse of France, and the subsequent passage overhead of four or five Heinkel or Junkers formations every day. We never dreamt that our particular beach could be coiled with barbed wire, and studded with guns; or of a morning when dive-bombers might crumble the expensive hotels along the front into dusty ruin, and fleets of low black steel barges disgorge snarler tanks up Tamarisk Avenue. Others went; we stayed. And when fear began to dawn, and we wrote spidery, tremulous letters to hoteliers who advertised "safe areas" in the reputable Sunday papers, they demanded 4½ guineas; and 4½ guineas per week into £250 per annum just won't go, even if the income tax doesn't soar. So we are still here.

Until last night it was all very peaceful. We woke regularly at dawn in the weeks when high tide went with dawn; but the snarlers never came. Hundreds of German planes flew over us every day; but as we are a gunless "fighter area," they came over very high to cope with waiting Spitfires or Hurricanes; and as we have no factories (thank God!) and few troops, they dropped nothing. We began to present our inertia as intrepidity. We had—why should we admit it was the purest accident?—selected one of the safest places in Britain for our wartime sojourn.

The Misses Shillito (Araminta, Agnes, and Mercy) posted delicately phrased warnings that the house provides adequate black-out curtains, and adjusts them nightly during dinner; therefore guests are liable for the fines resulting from any infringement. So we undress, and after carefully switching off the light (a £5 fine would convulse our individual finances for twelve months), we draw the curtains, reopen the windows, and creep to bed in the dark. Last night a few minutes after twelve our light septuagenarian slumbers were disturbed. There was a plane overhead. A Jerry obviously—not only were the search-lights poking for it, but its dot-and-carry-one exhaust bespoke a fuel-injection engine at cruising speed. Our hairs bristled—at least, some of us have no hair left to bristle. Its menacing burble came nearer . . . suddenly the sky split—blinding yellow light filled the rectangle of our window frames— . . . one, two, three, four, FIVE thundered the resounding crashes . . . the house lifted a foot on its foundations, waggled itself bodily sideways and back again . . . our elderly hearts stopped altogether for a moment, then beat again, and then palpitated furiously. We dived for our slippers, our dentures, our hair nets, or dressing gowns, and shuffled frenziedly down to the basement which Araminta (the most practical of the trio) has fortified with rejected mattresses of the non-slumber-easy type, now obsolete in all the best boarding houses.

That pitiful basement fortress housed for half an hour a cross-section of the genuine Britain. None of us has even been competent or distinguished. We are helpless, futile if you like, without function in the present national effort. But we sat there confronted by that dreaded death which had suddenly come in a twinkling so many paces closer to us. Not a voice quavered. Not a lip trembled. Not a pulse but had steadied swiftly after the first surprised involuntary reaction. We joked. We smiled. We chattered. We made tea. And anon we went back to our cheap little couches, and I honestly believe that we all slept quite soundly till our 9 a.m. breakfast.

In view of the night's ordeal the Misses Shillito gave us each a sausage (guaranteed 75 per cent. pork) *and* a boiled egg for breakfast. Normally we get a sausage, *or* a boiled egg. But not both!

B. H. DAVIES

"LIVE DANGEROUSLY!"

Scene in a Club

HERE ancient warriors drowse and sip their wine,
Here torpid poets quench the spark divine,
Extinct volcanoes scintillate no more,
And sacred bishops quite profanely snore;
The waiters hand cigars and coffee round,
The sleepy clock ticks on with soothing sound,
And here I sit, a rafter's beam half dead,
Wherein a death-watch beetle clicks his head.

A warning howls! The raiders are at hand!
Up leap the warriors! All alert they stand!
New sparks illumine each poetic eye,
Volcanic statesmen blaze into the sky,
Each bishop feels the stimulating shock,
And thinks it's time to watch his wandering flock;
Blithe waiters rush to fetch the hats of steel,
The clock beats forward on a hurrying wheel,
The death-watch beetle dies within my brain,
And I wake up to living life again.

All the sane men and women, near and far,
Join to deride the silliness of war;
Sane people must be right, but I would ask
Philosophers to undertake the task
Of showing how mere silliness inspires
Fresh life, fresh courage and unwonted fires.

H. W. NEVINSON

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Girl in the News," at the Empire
"God Gave Him a Dog," at the Plaza
"South of Pago-Pago," at the London Pavilion
"The Doctor Takes a Wife," at the Regal

Murder is front-page news when one takes one's seat at the Empire. "Nurse Graham Charged," says the fluttering placard, and it speaks from a vanished world. Then, mild-mannered gentlemen carved up their paramours in boarding-houses by the seaside, the trains were met at Waterloo, and we let our Sunday-morning coffee grow cold over columns of the *News of the World*. That era—despite a passing reference to the black-out—is revived in *The Girl in the News*. English habits and accents, for some reason, rarely convince on the screen unless linked to what the newspapers used to call a "tragedy," and *The Girl in the News*, with its atmosphere of provincial poisoning and the Assizes, is exceptionally convincing.

The thrills are provided by two deaths of invalids, one accidental suicide and the other murder, and the same nurse (Margaret Lockwood) is involved, innocently of course, in both. Miss Lockwood knows how to look angelic in uniform and appealing in the dock, but the film owes its reality to the acting of the minor parts (Emlyn Williams in a Bywaters role) and to the local colour, which is excellent. Two trials in one film may sound rather much, but we are given only enough of each for the story, and the detail has been brilliantly selected. Smooth procedure, the decorous toning-down of drama in court, give the legal atmosphere. The swing doors, where a visitor is instantly hushed as he approaches, shut in a scene which is midway between a Church congress and a surgical operation; in these surroundings an outburst from the accused or one of the witnesses seems an outrage against all learned wigs and patiently driven pens.

The use of stray detail, here and elsewhere in the film, is attractively cunning. While the Assizes are opening on the other side of the street we are taken into a barber's shop to watch a customer lying back and receiving gossip with his lather; a woman, crazy with insomnia, staggers towards the medicine cupboard in search of drugs, and the camera plays for a moment on a kitten fascinated by the hem of her nightdress. In little ways like this the director, Carol Reed, has shown imagination, and if he hasn't quite matched the glitter of Hitchcock in his heyday, *The Girl in the News* is still a pretty good film.

Despite dogs, and a title it would be hard to make doggier, I enjoyed *God Gave Him a Dog*. The film has sentimentalities—what film in which the leading actors are two children and a dog could avoid them?—but, all things considered, we are spared the worst of tears. Both the dog—a gun-dog as expert as a skilled mechanic—and the two children, one white and one black, who train him, are delightful. Most of the shots were taken in Albany, Georgia, and there is an unexpected interest in the scenes of dog kennels, field trials, and visiting landowners, amid a landscape varying from scrubby heathland to forest swamps impressively weird. The camera, being occupied with a dog's life in action, takes all this in unconcernedly and often beautifully. Piled-up clouds, carts rattling through the long shadows of evening, quail flying up from a hollow—even an eye reluctant to see the background beyond the pasteboard will find repose here.

South of Pago-Pago begins with the advantage that for anyone now living on the Greenwich latitude it is pleasant to dream oneself farther and farther south. But the idyll proved to be rather idiotic: the festoons and flowers on dark hair, the love games in pools fed by waterfalls, the flimsy boats overturning in transparent seas—it has been done before, and a hundred times better. The producers, in taking as their theme the invasion of the white man, have had the intelligence to give a realistic picture of exploitation and the dangers of diving too deep for pearls, but having got as far as Victor McLagen in a disagreeable role, they have pulled themselves up short. Romance, after all, is the excuse for southern climes, and so Romance—between a Manoan chief (Jon Hall) and a drifting saloon girl (Frances Farmer), who looks odd in her native outfit—turns up, lusciously and rather sickeningly, trumps. However, for those who like it, there is some good fighting of the old school.

The Doctor Takes a Wife is a fair specimen of the tangled comedy. He (Ray Milland) is a medico whose professorship depends, rather unconvincingly, on getting married; she (Loretta Young, very much Loretta Young) is a bestseller whose last success was *Spinsters Ain't Spinach*. By accident they get together and fake a marriage, and get into endless difficulty, and fall in love. Well, it's not quite so bad as it sounds.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, September 28th—
Beatrice King: "Family Life in the U.S.S.R.", 98 Gower Street, 2.30.
A Delegate Conference of Progressive Societies, Groups and Individuals. Speakers: Sir Richard Acland, Rev. Albert Belden and J. Carveth Wells. Conway Hall, 3.

SUNDAY, September 29th—
Laurence Housman: "Dead Certainties," Conway Hall, 11.

MONDAY, September 30th—
1940 Exhibition of Artists International Assoc., Royal Society of British Artists Gallery, Suffolk Street, Daily 10-5. Till October 10th.

WEDNESDAY, October 2nd—
E. F. M. Durbin: "What Have We to Defend?" Morley College, 7.30.

Correspondence

THE WAR IN EAST LONDON

SIR,—Mr. Ritchie Calder wrote in last week's NEW STATESMAN AND NATION an article which must have earned for him the gratitude of all those who know and care about the working people of London. Some headway has already been made in preventing a repetition of the worst disasters he describes, and there is at least a sign that the Government and the public realise a little of the misery of East London and are trying to do something about it. Much of the work of evacuation, billeting and relieving distress is being carried out with the greatest efficiency and understanding.

To begin with a few facts in the present situation. Large areas in the East End are now deserted and derelict. In one typical area a block of modern flats stands erect—windowless and doorless, filled with millions of fragments of broken glass, wood and plaster; furniture, often surprisingly intact, is unprotected. All around is ruin—a desert of dust as arid as Sahara, and as silent. Only the mewing of a few forlorn cats makes a noise more startling than a siren. By splendid efforts the Assistance Board, the local authorities and voluntary organisations have contrived to billet many hundreds of families and supply them with food, clothing and ready cash. Many other families have made their own arrangements and are living with relatives. This activity is all to the good. But the East End is not the only part of London's poorer districts which is suffering badly from air-raid damage, and East-Enders and others who have not been "bombed out" are not being evacuated officially except in the cases of mothers and young children. If families find their own billets they can obtain some help with fares, but their liability for rent remains, even if they live in the flimsiest cottages between the gas works and the docks. In some districts outside London last Sunday there were pathetic groups of drenched people looking for billets which could not be found.

The question of air-raid shelters in London is being widely discussed, but the problem is not yet fully appreciated. Even where the Anderson shelter is not half-full of water, and the shelter provided for a block of flats is well built, these refuges are becoming horrible places for permanent dormitories. Six feet of floor space per person is allowed in the communal shelters; so that if people were to lie down in coffin-like ranks they could, conceivably, rest. But if mattresses and chairs are provided (there are some people who *cannot* lie on the floor) and a passage-way is left free—this is impossible in practice. In fact, very few people have anything like a night's rest in their shelters. They are kept awake by the noise of the air raids, and disturbed by other people who are ill and restless.

In one vault in the East End, intended as an emergency shelter for 5,000 people, I am told that 10,000 people take refuge every night, and that as no one is responsible for cleaning and disinfecting, no one cleans or disinfects. The disease of "tube or shelter throat" is developing; what more serious epidemics may be expected, we can all imagine.

Looting is increasing. Shopkeepers and householders whose premises have been bombed or burnt out cannot get transport at once for the goods they have been able to salvage. Here is one typical example from many which could be quoted. An old-age pensioner suffering from asthma was given a seat by the fire (it was pouring with rain) while he waited for a Council van to move his goods to a new billet. The Council could not send a van, and friends prepared to move his goods on a barrow. While they had gone to fetch the barrow, sheets, clothing and many movable possessions were looted.

Thousands of people are thrown out of work, sometimes only for a few days, sometimes indefinitely, because business houses have been bombed or the supply of gas is cut off. They should not have to wait three days before being eligible for unemployment pay.

High praise is due to the work of the Assistance Board and to many Councils, voluntary organisations and individuals—but there are still far too many different and unco-ordinated authorities, too many forms to fill up, and too many miles to cover. Here are two typical instances of avoidable misery. An A.R.P. worker was injured in an air raid. It took his wife eight hours to trace him (this probably could not be helped); she visited him in a hospital, found his injuries were not very serious but that he would be disabled for some weeks. She was told where to apply for assistance during his illness. She arrived at this address and was redirected. At the second address she was given a form to fill up and take to another address. She filled up the form and went two miles to the third address. "But this white form," said the official, "is useless. You should have had a pink form." This story is literally correct and is not a joke.

A number of practical proposals for meeting the emergency have been made. The next step should be the establishment of a central Board for London, with full powers to organise evacuation and billeting, and to co-ordinate the relief work of the Assistance Board, the L.C.C. Rest Centres, the Borough Councils, the U.A.B., the Labour Exchanges, the Red Cross, the W.V.S., the settlements, churches, and voluntary units. Such a board needs the finest and most experienced personnel available: homes must be found for dispossessed families in large empty houses with good basements and shelters—in London, for those who must remain in London, in the country for those who can leave London. Good hostels for men and community feeding centres for those who work in the City and East End, and for whom accommodation has been found in the West End, are badly needed. Safe, sufficient, and sanitary shelters are more important still: a large part of London may have to be catacombed.

Such measures as these must be taken quickly: they are the least we owe to the people who are suffering most.

IRENE T. BARCLAY

SIR,—All your readers must have been moved—more to anger than to tears—by Ritchie Calder's account of the conditions in bombed East London. This was one of the few published accounts that have made no attempt to divert attention from the scandal of our unpreparedness and the horrors that have resulted from it by exploiting the courage of the sufferers of East London.

Once the Government and the West End recovered some of their composure after the first shock of the news from East London some conveniently placed bombs on Buckingham Palace and the smart shops

gave just the right cue for the cry that "we all suffer together." The courage of the East End and the common peril shared with the King and the Duke of Kent were used as thick smoke screens behind which the fundamental ineptitude of official A.R.P. policy was hidden. So successful was this deliberate policy that even now, with the example of the miseries of those in bombed areas before their eyes, few people realise what they are entitled to demand of their Government.

First of all it must be made clear that bomb-proof shelters *can and must* be built and that the work *must* be started *at once*. The A.R.P. Co-ordinating Committee and the Association of Architects, Surveyors and Technical Assistants have been urging a policy of bomb-proof shelters on the Government for over two years. Concrete proposals and plans have been presented to the appropriate Ministers and they were ignored. The criminal folly of this neglect has reaped its bloody reward. But those responsible are safe in their shelters. The Government has been forced to give way on the question of the use of the tubes as shelters and on the opening of certain large private shelters at night. It can and must be forced to provide all the bomb-proof shelters needed. Otherwise newpaper stories of East End courage may become harder to find.

It is only when they are secure that the many homeless people can be settled in either vulnerable or reception areas. Until we have proper shelters there will be continuous large secondary shiftings of refugees from their first places of refuge and an accumulating worsening of health and spirits. Re-housing and shelter problems must be solved as a unit.

Ritchie Calder's exposure of the chaos of authorities is valuable and his suggestion for a Welfare Board a most useful one, but it only touches the surface of the difficulties. There should be a rapidly and carefully calculated "zoning" of the country and towns into areas suitable for the reception of each class of refugee, young or old, healthy or infirm, those who must be moved far away and those who must remain near their old homes to work. The problem must be tackled on a far wider scale than a Welfare Board for London alone could possibly handle.

The Evacuation Committee of the A.A.S.T.A. a year ago presented to the Ministers concerned a scheme for "Planned Evacuation," a scheme which would have removed children of school and nursery school age, mothers with infants, the aged and the infirm from the scenes of misery many of them inhabit to-day. The utter failure of the Government's patch-work plans is bitterly proved by the pathetic family groups seeking nightly shelter as best they can.

In an Evacuation Report issued by the A.A.S.T.A. it was stated that there are some 700,000 rooms in houses with ten or more rooms in the safe areas of Great Britain. At least half of these houses could be taken over for evacuees, the rest being assumed to be needed for other wartime purposes or for justifiable private use. Much play has been made in the newspapers about the establishment of East End refugees in West End flats and houses. Why the delay in taking over large country houses which are far safer?

It is stated that the police have had in view certain accommodation which could be taken over when required. This is the job of experts who understand housing problems, health, and other needs. From a Government which has the power to control persons and property for the nation's need we expect a far more speedy, organised and intelligent handling of the acute difficulties of the homeless and of our children than has so far been the case. Food, heating, shelter, transport are all within reach. Our civilians in the front line of battle must have them at once!

E. V. PENN,
Association of Architects, Surveyors and Technical Assistants,
113 High Holborn, W.C.1.

SIR,—Ritchie Calder's article in your paper of last week provides me with a vivid picture of a scene I had observed only from a distance and in comparative security. As a doctor working in the Admission Room of a hospital in the East End, I saw another side of the picture.

First and foremost, let me say that from the German point of view the raids on London have been a failure. The failure was evident after the first three days. Of our morale there can be very few in this country who have not first-hand evidence of how that is standing the strain. The only cumulative effect has been to increase our determination.

I could quote instances in great number of courage and stubborn tenacity, as can most people who have experienced air raids . . .

Of the casualties, "Chawley," the window-cleaner, stands out in my mind, more because he provided a comic relief. Aged sixty-five, small but wiry, dressed in the loose, ill-fitting clothes of his working type, he had been blown out of his bed on a ground floor in some flats. He was covered with dust from head to foot. He thought it was all a huge joke. "I shawn't 'ave any winders to clean to-morrow," he said.

But apart from the tragedy of the injured, there is another tragedy about which I want to make a very special point. Statistics may show that the people are relatively safer in surface shelters, and quite an extraordinary degree of protection from bodily injury is provided by these structures. But what of the problem of sleep; what of the hygiene?

There is no doubt that this attack from the air has not been on the scale that most of us imagined it would be in September of last year. And yet, living in the almost certain knowledge that it would come one day, only a small part of the total problem has been tackled in advance.

An unfair, and unnecessary, strain has been thrown on the morale of the civilian population. Any normal emotional reactions to strain are multiplied in direct proportion to lack of sleep. The smug instructions that people should go to their *surface* shelters for the night, show a lack of imagination it is difficult to comprehend. How can people in crowded districts get enough sleep to fit them for the tasks of the day?

Convention forbids one to harp on the scenes in the shelters. But the people are not to be blamed any more than anybody is to be blamed for being born, or for the natural processes which tend to be stimulated by anxiety and danger.

Is it too late to provide adequate deep shelters? I do not think so. On the contrary, surely here is an opportunity for a Government of foresight to start work in wartime to provide something of permanent value. With careful planning, shelters could be built that would provide adequate protection and comfort now, so that people may sleep without fear; and in the future the shelters would provide public assistance in its many varied forms.

In the Camberwell Road there is a Club for boys and girls of working classes. The Club is underneath a church. It was built there because there was not room to build it anywhere else. This "Clubland," built in peacetime with no thought of war, ironically enough provides an example to be copied now. In some cases shelters could be used for garages, stores or other commercial purposes, and provide a source of revenue to the Government.

East End. H. D. S. V.

REFUGEES

SIR,—Having settled down home again after my "Governmental holidays" I consider it my most agreeable duty thanking you for the articles you published in favour of the unfortunate refugees, whose only fault was having trusted too much in the century-old renown as THE refuge *par excellence* of this country and believed it populated by angels and saints.

Special thanks we owe you—for I am sure speaking in the name of thousands of interned and released refugees—for the article in the issue of August 3rd concerning Huyton. When the situation improved there remarkably, when the number of suicides did not augment, when some well-meaning and whole-hearted men among the interned refugees were able to pull their camp comrades out of the state of despair and inspire them with more or less cheerfulness and trust into the final victory of common sense, you may fairly attribute a good deal of those improvements to your article.

That is the reason why I ask you to-day to help those unfortunate refugees whose nerves are weakening and their other diseases deteriorating under the strain of internment, so that many nervous breakdowns may be feared during the bad season. Such a situation will be reached soon in those camps which are not provided with recreation grounds or other exercise accommodations. Central Promenade Camp, Douglas, has a circumference of 460 yards (four hundred and sixty) in which were heaped together during its worst time 2,000 (two thousand) "inhabitants," many of them over 60 years old and suffering from serious diseases. These cripples were not in a position to participate in the daily walks guarded by fixed bayonets. When bad weather makes a stroll along the barbed wires impossible, confining the poor people in the dining-rooms of their 34 houses, the situation will become worse. As I used to be a doctor myself and know that camp and its inhabitants by experience, I fear many nervous breakdowns, if those unfortunate people are not released before the bad weather begins. The prospect to be, at last, released in consequence of those breakdowns and the connected aggravation of their diseases is of no help for those poor people, for they will become in the same time unfit for life's struggle.

Please do help those unfortunate refugees to be freed before the rains come.

43 St. John's Villas, MAX BRESLAUER
Upper Holloway, N.19.

YOUTH MOVEMENTS

SIR,—I am sure there are many who will endorse much of what Mr. Worsley had to say on this subject in your last issue. Two of his points, in particular, I should like to emphasise.

The first concerns the Board of Education. It is obviously most essential that any comprehensive measures for the training of youth should be conceived in purely educational terms and that these should be given the most generous interpretation. Moreover, for the best of reasons, it is equally essential that whatever action is taken should be subject to full Parliamentary supervision and approval. It is clear, therefore, that the Board must play a prominent and responsible part in the planning and direction of any such project, working, of course, through the local education authorities.

It seems, however, that Mr. Worsley would agree that the Board, with its present constitution and powers and administrative tradition, is not adequately equipped to frame and carry into effect the kind of scheme that is now so generally felt to be needed. What, then, does Mr. Worsley suggest? If there is not to be an independent organisation, either the Board must be reconstituted as a Ministry having powers in all care of the young from infancy to maturity, or some organisation must be worked out providing for effective co-operation of all the Ministries whose activities concern this field. The point is of high importance if we are to secure at the same time the necessary comprehensiveness of outlook and the indispensable directness of focus.

The second point concerns the Day Continuation School. In some form or other, more generously conceived than even under the Fisher Act, we shall need it, if educational provision for youth is to have structure and order as well as attractiveness. It should be possible within the administrative system to provide a great diversity of openings while securing a suitably ordered and sustained regimen for every type of boy and girl.

But I hope Mr. Worsley is not allowing himself to slip into dangerous errors about education from which we in this country have been more free than have some other lands. To identify education with schooling is always harmful, and most of all so in the adolescent years, especially for that large class of not unintelligent boys and girls who are not born to be school-learners. Unpleasantly allied with this false identification is that other one which fails to distinguish State and Society; surely the essence of totalitarianism.

No doubt Mr. Worsley would disclaim adhesion to either of these heresies. But in this all-important field of youth-training we know now how harmful they can be. If, therefore, he pleads "not guilty," he should exculpate himself by elaborating a little further the forms in which he would wish to see a youth service carried on.

May I comment briefly on two other points? Now that we have had experience of total war we cannot make it a charge against a scheme of training that it has "pre-military" value. War in these times calls for such a concentration of well-balanced and well-controlled personal powers over the whole range that the best military preparation and the best all-round education were never so much the same thing as they are to-day. As for the County Badge scheme its central idea is not military at all. It is rather that of *moral release* by the thorough testing of one's powers and the achievement, through freely accepted ordeal, of self-mastery.

Finally, why drag in the *Times*? Mr. Worsley is not alone in finding grounds for uneasiness in some of the views about education that have been expressed in that journal. But how we do impoverish

ourselves by regarding this source and that as wholly tainted, so that nothing which has touched it can ever be of service to us! This is just caste, "No Popery!" and all the other forms of prejudice through which we perversely deny to ourselves opportunities and facilities of which we ought to be able to make good use. Mr. Worsley will recall that story of General Booth who, when he was rebuked for taking over popular music-hall melodies for the use of his Salvation Army, retorted that he could not see why the devil should have all the best tunes!

Surely this is common sense, by whatever name the devil may be called, whether Hitler, the *Times*, or the Public School Tradition, or anything else.

University of London Institute of Education, London, W.C.1. F. CLARKE

BRITAIN AND THE U.S.S.R.

SIR,—Mr. J. M. Sinclair is quite wrong in saying that THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION remains constant to the battle-cry "My Russia, right or wrong." Let me give two examples:

(1) A few years before the present war THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION published a pamphlet entitled "The Dying Peace" in which it was shown quite clearly that the National Government was slowly murdering Peace, yet when Peace finally died THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION blamed Russia, "precipitating the war"—it called it.

(2) During the Russo-Finnish conflict THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION openly welcomed the despatch of arms to Mannerheim and wished for a Finnish victory. The Baltic States freely voted for union with the U.S.S.R. and can in no way be compared with Hitler's method in annexing Bohemia; we did not read in the *Daily Telegraph* that thousands of people danced in the streets of Prague throughout the night when Hitler's army marched into that capital.

After the abortive revolution of 1905 the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (Bolshevik) made it clear to the world that they would not recognise any foreign loans made to the Tsarist Government, but this warning was as contemptuously ignored as David Keir Hardie's efforts were in founding the Labour Party in this country.

In any case the loan indebtedness to England and France is cancelled out through damage done by Anglo-French interventionist armies and by blockade.

As for Mr. J. Stewart Cook, he seems to forget the following in speculating whether Stalin is sincere in his desire for friendship with this country:

(a) Stalin joined the League of Nations.

(b) After the rape of Austria, Sudetenland and Prague, Stalin was the first to propose concerted measures to stop further aggressions.

(c) In the period 1934/39 Stalin showed admirable patience in the face of one insult after another.

Mr. Cook says "we are all for friendship between Britain and Russia." But are we? I suppose Britain's guarantee to Poland without consulting Russia, and the closing of the Burma Road—mainly of Russian arms to China—is proof of this?

Suggestion—why not sack Halifax, and replace him by Sir Stafford Cripps, sending Pritt to Moscow?

43 Hampshire House, Bourne Avenue, Bournemouth. S. VYNER.

[The game of "what did the *N.S. & N.* say in 1884" amuses many people and is no novelty. Possibly we might whisper one tip to competitors: we have never supported or attacked anyone "right or wrong."—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

SIR,—I always thought that THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION was to be numbered with those who detest robbery and hold that aggression must not be allowed to pay. Such people were horrified, not so long ago, by the handing over to a German-controlled government of gold belonging to the Czechs. This week THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION refers to "the pedantry of the Foreign Office in refusing to sanction the transfer of bank credits that stood to the account of the former Baltic States, and says, disapprovingly, that this "has irritated Moscow." THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION was once a spirited opponent of appeasement, and it is most disturbing to find that now it is ready, apparently, to spare the Russian aggressor annoyance. One is obliged to ask oneself, if there was any abiding principle behind THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION'S former championship of the rights of small nations, especially when the statement already quoted is followed by the familiar and nauseating attempts to discredit the victim which the apologists for aggressors always make. It seems that the Baltic States' "internal structure was unstable and undemocratic," and "their return to the Russian system is, in all probability, as final as it was inevitable." I am not competent to assess the merits and demerits of the governments of these little states, but that the people over whom they ruled had a much higher standard of living than the Russian ruling clique ever bothered to provide for its subjects is attested by travellers, and also by the pathetic delight shown by the Russian soldiers in the wares they found in the shops of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

And why "final and inevitable"? I can only suppose that "inevitable" means that THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION recognises as a matter of stark fact that predatory, treacherous and unprincipled governments, like those of Japan, Germany, Italy, and Russia, will naturally lay their greedy hands on the property and liberty of their fellow men if they are not in fear of opposition, and that "final" suggests that THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION accepts the outrage to the Baltic States with equanimity. To do otherwise might be to irritate Moscow, and naturally it would be a pity to grudge to a country so vast and so rich in natural resources as Russia is, that small portion of the earth's surface which her neighbours have been happy to call their own. MARY CUBITT.

19 Effingham Road, Surbiton.

HEIL HUNGER!

SIR,—I see from Mr. Stanley Unwin's letter that Dr. Gumpert is to be invited to reply to my criticisms in the *Nineteenth Century* of his book, *Heil Hunger!* Space did not permit me to deal with all the points raised in that entertaining volume, but here are a few more to which Dr. Gumpert might reply at the same time.

On p. 55 he says, "In 1935 there were 1,751 cases of bacteriological food poisoning reported; in 1936, 3,674. In one year therefore there was an increase of more than 100 per cent." All these statements are literally true, but why has Dr. Gumpert omitted to quote the footnote attached to the German table which is that "Until 1935 only cases of poisoning by meat, fish and sausage were reported"?

On p. 18, in his efforts to show that there has been a fall in the German birth-rate, Dr. Gumpert states that the number of mothers with four or more children has fallen since 1933. This again is true, but why has he made no reference to the numbers of wives with no children, and the numbers of mothers with one, two, and three children, all of which groups have increased?

Why in the same section has he endeavoured to show a decline in the marriage-rate under Nazi rule when, in fact, the marriage-rate was 7.9 per 1,000 in 1932 and 9.4 per 1,000 in 1938?

14 Bolingbroke Grove, S.W.11. WILLIAM A. BREND

EXPLANATION REQUIRED

SIR,—It has come to my knowledge that the self-constituted Czech Government, which enjoys the protection of the British Government, has just issued an order which strikes at the roots of the most elementary of the Rights of Man, viz.: that no Czech soldier serving in the Czech Army in Britain may marry a British woman unless he has been resident in Britain since September 1st, 1938. Exception is made if the bride is of Czech nationality.

I have protested to Dr. Benes and other members of the Czech Government against this reactionary, immoral, chauvinistic and dictatorial action of his Government and have promised to bring the matter immediately to the attention of the National Council for Civil Liberties, the Lords, the Commons and the Press. A. B. DOWSON.

63 Kingsfield Road, Watford.

TIMES CHANGE

SIR,

At Mons the Angels of the Lord arrived
To see that Britain's sons survived.
Times change: when high explosive falls
Among the precincts of St. Paul's
It takes a bomb-disposal squad
To extricate the House of God.

G. F. DUDMAN

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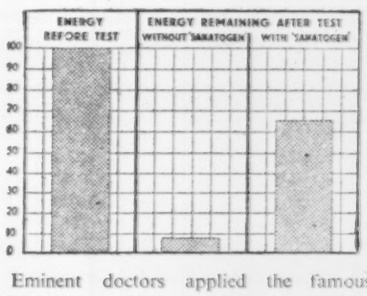

Eminent doctors applied the famous Scheiner Test to a number of indoor workers. They found that six hours' continuous work left them with only 8% of their normal energy. After a *fortnight's* course of 'Sanatogen' the workers were again tested under precisely similar conditions. This time, 66% of energy remained. *This proves conclusively that 'Sanatogen' gives you 58% more energy.*

The Registered Trade Mark 'SANATOGEN' applied to Nerve-Tonic Food, denotes a brand of casein and sodium glycerophosphate chemically combined by Genatosan Limited, the proprietors of the Trade Mark.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THERE are two books which are the perfect medicine for the present time: Voltaire's *Candide* and Fielding's *Jonathan Wild*. They deal with our kind of news but with this advantage over contemporary literature: that it is our news assimilated and digested. We see our situation at a manageable remove. This is an important consolation and, on the whole, *Jonathan Wild* is the more specific because the narrower and more trenchant book. Who, if not ourselves, are the victims of what are called "Great Men"? Who can better jump to the insinuation that the Prig or cut-purse of Newgate and the swashbuckler of Berchtesgaden are the same kind of man and that Caesar and Alexander were morally indistinguishable from the gang leaders, sharpers, murderers, pick-pockets from whom Mr. Justice Fielding, in later years, was to free the City of London? Europe has been in the hands of megalomaniacs for two decades. Tyranny abroad, corruption at home—that recurrent theme of the eighteenth-century satirists who were confronted by Absolute monarchy and the hunt for places—is our own. Who are we but the good—with a small middle class "g"—who are "They" but the raving self-elected "leaders" of the masses? And *Jonathan Wild* has the attraction of a great *tour de force* which does not shatter us because it remains for all its realism on the intellectual plane. Where Swift, in contempt, sweeps us out of the very stables; where Voltaire advises us not to look beyond our allotments upon the wilderness humanity has created, Fielding is ruthless only with the brain. He is arbitrary. What could be more arbitrary than that impossible argument of his that there is an incompatibility between greatness and goodness? But he is not destructive. Of the eighteenth century's three scourgers of mankind he is the least egotistical and the most moral. He has not destroyed the world; he has merely turned it upside down as a polished dramatist will force a play out of a paradox:

> Contradicting the obsolete doctrines of a Set of Simple Fellows called, in Derision, Sages or Philosophers, who have endeavoured as much as possible to confound the Ideas of Greatness and Goodness, whereas no two Things can possibly be more distinct from each other. For Greatness consists in bringing all Manner of Mischief on Mankind, and Goodness in removing it from them.

The marvel of *Jonathan Wild* is that it is a paradox sustained with, perhaps the strain, but above all with the decisiveness, flexibility, and exhilaration of a scorching trumpet call which does not falter for one moment and even dares very decorative and difficult variations on the way to its assured conclusion. The reader of satire is always reading against the whole current of his beliefs and wishes; until he has learned that satire is anger laughing at its own futility, he protests and argues silently against the author. This we do less in reading *Jonathan Wild*, I think, than in Voltaire and Swift. In *Jonathan Wild*, if any exhaustion comes to the reader, it is the exhaustion of making the intellect constantly reverse the meanings of "Great" and "Good," Vice and Virtue as we go along. Otherwise, the book is a young man's book, delighted with its assumption and driven on with masterly nonchalance and command.

To the rigidity of his idea Fielding brought not only the liveliness of picaresque literature but, more important, his experience as a playwright. Satire deals in types and artifices and needs the economy of the dramatist, who can sweep a scene off the moment the point is made, who can keep his fingers nimble on a complicated plot or action—for, being about types, satire needs to be kept fluid with force, intrigue and movement—who has tricks up his sleeve and is expert in surprises. We are happily distracted in *Jonathan Wild* between pleasure in his political references (the pointed one on the quarrels between the gangsters about the style of their hats, for example, which Wild settles with the genius of a dictator) and the dexterity of the author. "Hitler is lonely": one of the greatest scenes in the book, one which stands beside Wild's famous quarrel with his wife Tishy when he called her a bitch, is the occasion of the superb comedy of Wild's soliloquy in the boat. Put adrift in an open boat by the Captain who has rescued Heartfree's wife from Wild's attempt at rape, Wild has his "black Friday" and muses on the loneliness of "the Great," their unhappiness and on the fear of death. Since death is inevitable, Wild cries, why not now? A man of action, forever acting to an audience, if only an imaginary one, he staggers us by throwing himself into the sea. Were we wrong? Was he courageous after all? We knew that a crook lives in gestures, that a show of toughness is all—were we misreading him? Down comes the curtain. The dramatic effect is enormous, quite beyond the reach of the picaresque novelists who depend on intrigue alone for their effect. Among the satirists Voltaire (another writer for the stage) was capable of Fielding's scene; but Swift was always willing to let a situation ease away into ironical discussion. And then, up goes the curtain again: Wild is saved. He is in a boat once more. Saved by one of those disillusioning miracles of fiction? Not at all. He is back in his *own* boat. He swam back to it. Nature whispered that she had designed him to be "Great," told him to get back. That is a master stroke.

Such cross-ruffing is the heart of stage farce. Where Wild picks the pockets of his accomplices, double-crosses the card-sharping count, swindles and is swindled in turn, each act adds to his character and to the anatomy of "Greatness." It has been said that Fielding's common sense and his low view that human beings were actuated chiefly by self-interest, restricted his imagination. This may be so, though the greater restriction was to his sensibility. In the light of the knowledge we have of the "Great Men" of action who are destroying the world to-day, we are not likely to think the portrait of Wild unimaginative because Fielding takes an unpoetical view. There is the scene where the Count, who, with Wild, has swindled Heartfree over the casket of jewels, has double-crossed Wild by substituting paste for the stolen treasure. Worse still, Tishy, whom Wild intends to seduce by the gift of the casket, has worked in a pawnbroker's and knows paste when she sees it. Wild is left to another soliloquy, to the sadness of Berchtesgaden or neo-Imperial Rome. "They" are always sad:

> How vain is human Greatness! . . . How unhappy is the state of Priggism! How impossible for Human Prudence to foresee and guard against each Circumvention! . . . In this a *Prig* is more unhappy than any other: a cautious man may in a Crowd, preserve his own Pockets by keeping his hand in them; but while he employ his Hands in another's pockets, how shall he be able to defend his own? Where is his Greatness? I answer in his Mind; 'Tis the inward Glory, the secret Consciousness of doing great and wonderful Actions, which can alone support the truly Great Man, whether he be a Conqueror, a Tyrant, a Minister or a Prig. These must bear him up against the private Curse and public Imprecation, and while he is hated and detested by all Mankind, must make him inwardly satisfied with himself. For what but some such inward satisfaction as this could inspire Men possessed of Wealth, of Power, of every human Blessing, which Pride, Luxury, or Avarice could desire, to forsake their Homes, abandon Ease and Repose, and, at the Expense of Riches, Pleasures, at the Price of Labour and Hardship, and at the Hazard of all that Fortune hath liberally given them, could send them at the Head of a Multitude of *Prigs* called an Army, to molest their Neighbours, to introduce Rape, Rapine, Bloodshed and every kind of Misery on their own Species? What but some such glorious Appetite of Mind . . ."

Intoxicating stuff. The eighteenth-century's attack on absolutism, its cry of "Liberty," its plea for the measured, the rational, and even the conventional culminated—in what? Napoleon. And then democracy. It is painful to listen to the flying Prigs of the democracy's Jonathan Wilds. Was the moral view of human nature mistaken? Is the Absolute People as destructive as the Absolute King? Is the evil not in the individual, but in society? We rally to the eighteenth-century cry of "Liberty"; it is infectious, hotter indeed than it sounds to-day. Is it possible that those good settled, educated middle-class men of the time of Queen Anne owed their emancipation to a Tyrant who burned half Ireland, killed his King and went in private hysterical dread of the devil? The men of the eighteenth century seem always under that smooth prose, under that perfect deploying of abstractions, to be hiding a number of frightening things that are neither perfect nor abstract. There is the madness of Swift, the torment of Wesley. Or was Fielding imagining the paradise of the anarchists where goodness enables us to dispense with leaders. Sitting under the wings of the flying Prigs, we observe the common, indeed the commonplace, the non-combatant man, behaving with a greatness which appears to require no leadership but merely the promptings of sober and decent instincts.

Of course, the good are fools. Look at the Heartfrees! What a couple! But here again if you have made your head ache over Fielding's impossible theme, it is cured at once by the felicities to which the Heartfrees drive Fielding's invention. The letters which Heartfree gets from his impecunious or disingenuous debtors are a perfect collection; and Mrs. Heartfree's sea adventures in which there is hardly a moment between Holland and Africa when she is not defending her honour, are not so much padding, but give a touch of spirit to her shopkeeping virtue and also serve the purpose of satirising the literature of travel. It is hard on Mrs. Heartfree; perhaps Fielding was insensitive. Without that insensibility we should have missed the episode with the monster who was large as Windsor Castle, an episode which reminds us that the spirit of the 9 o'clock news was already born in the seventeen hundreds:

> I take it it be the strangest Instance of that Intrepidity, so justly remarked in our Seamen, which can be found on Record. In a Wood then, one of our Musketeers coming up to the Beast, as he lay on the Ground and with his Mouth wide open, marched directly down his Throat.

He had gone down to shoot the Monster in the heart. And we should have missed another entrancing sight. Mrs. Heartfree perceived a fire in the desert and thought at first she was approaching human habitation.

> But on nearer Approach, we perceived a very Beautiful Bird just expiring in the Flames. This was none other than the celebrated Phoenix.

The sailors threw it back into the Fire so that it "might follow its own Method of propagating its Species."

Yes, the Heartfrees would have a lot to talk about afterwards. There is a charm in the artlessness of Mrs. Heartfree, if Heartfree is a bit of a stodge. One can understand why she introduced just a shade of protracted suspense in the accounts of how she saved her honour.

V. S. PRITCHETT

THINKING IN WARTIME

The War for Peace. By LEONARD WOOLF. *Routledge.* 7s. 6d.

There are, thank goodness, some strange souls who insist on thinking. They thought during the last war and they are still at it in the more complex and dangerous circumstances of to-day. Mr. Leonard Woolf is an outstanding thinker and his *International Government* was one of the sources from which the League of Nations sprang. *The War for Peace* re-states the main thesis of his former book; he remarks in a footnote that "time does not seem to me to have invalidated its main conclusions. This, of course, may be due to mental sclerosis, to which we are all liable, but, on the other hand, it may possibly be due to the fact that the conclusions were right."

On this occasion Mr. Woolf's jumping-off ground is an attack levelled against all "Utopian" thinking by Professor E. H. Carr. In *The Twenty Years Crisis* Mr. Carr argued that there were "real" forces and rivalries in Europe and that the League was an academic and unreal way of dealing with them. The Realists think in terms of power; the supporters of the League of Nations, he suggested, evolved a theory about how Europe should be governed and tried to impose on the world an organisation which could not in the nature of things cope with the complex and fundamental problems which arose from the geography and history of Europe and from the very nature of the State itself. He could support this attack by naive quotations from some League advocates. Mr. Woolf retorts with a scathing exposition. The whole division between the Realists and the Utopians he finds absurd; he argues that the problem of politics has always been to bring the forces which make for anarchy under control, and that there is nothing in the nature of States to make the attempt to control them any more unrealistic than there was anything in the nature of kings or barons or capitalists to prevent their gradual acceptance of the rules and controls which democracy has in fact succeeded in imposing on them. Nothing could have been as "unrealistic" as the Chamberlain policy of appeasement, which Mr. Carr supported and which altogether failed to take account of the nature of the Fascist regimes and led to a disaster long foreseen by the Utopians as inevitable unless State sovereignty could be brought under the control of international institutions. "If 50 per cent. of the population of Europe," he says, "had believed and understood the principles of the League, there would certainly be no Hitler and probably no power politics or war; there would be a League system working as efficiently and naturally as the L.C.C. or the N.U.R.; and Professor Carr, instead of explaining to us the terrific reality of power and national conflicting interests, would be giving the most interesting lectures to his pupils in Aberystwyth on the Utopianism of Napoleon, Bismarck and Clemenceau, the reality of the League, and the inevitability of international co-operation in the modern world of closely knit international common interests."

Everyone interested in political thinking should read this controversy. Seldom indeed at this period of doubt and confusion are opposite points of view stated with such clarity and force. I do not myself agree wholly with either controversialist. Mr. Woolf is certainly right that historical progress has come from successful efforts to subject great and apparently permanently anarchic forces to measures of organised control. It is true, too, that if the world had adopted his remedy for war, that is, if enough people in important positions and in enough countries had seen the folly of international anarchy and had been prepared to work the League organisation set up in 1919, even at certain risks to themselves and other

WANTED—a man!

These words are addressed to one man. Perhaps you can identify him.

Under more normal conditions he looks like any other male reader of this paper, but at the present time he is going about in an incredibly old suit, giving the impression of no longer caring about his appearance.

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people, then the chance of a great war would have been small. Nor, as Mr. Woolf says, is it any good replying to him as critics often do, that he errs in expecting people to act "rationally" in their political life. He has long ago given up, he tells us, expecting any such thing; all he can do as a modest political scientist is to tell people that if they want certain ends, they must adopt certain means, and he notes that gradually, perhaps too gradually, men, like dogs and other animals, do learn by experience. What they failed to learn after the last war they may perhaps learn after yet another war. If they do not achieve a general Federation after this war they may perhaps achieve certain regional federations, and, within the limits of Europe, set up institutions which will prevent general suicide. There is nothing, Mr. Woolf says, in the nature of man to prevent this happening and there are many examples in history to show that it might happen. In any case, he can only appeal to reason in politics as in other things. If a man asks him how to get peas in his garden next summer, he tells him to sow peas in a certain way and place at intervals from March to June. He cannot promise that if he does X, Y will inevitably follow. He only says if you want Y to happen you must do X. The peas may be destroyed by mice or birds or disease. "It still remains true—and the truth is not unimportant—that if he wants peas in the summer, he must sow them between March and June." And he goes on: "What applies to peas applies to peace. Using reason we can tell a man what he must do if he wants peas, but that does not imply that he *will* use his reason and get peas." Mr. Woolf believes that he can tell Europeans what they must do if they want peace; he does not prophesy "that they will use their reason, do it, or obtain peace."

This is a good answer to those who attack people like Leonard Woolf and Norman Angell on the ground that they expect too much from human reason. But the criticism is wrongly directed. What the critics should say is that these political scientists have stated their problem in too simple a form. Thus, to take Mr. Woolf's own illustration, if the man who wants to grow peas follows Mr. Woolf's advice and then finds that his peas do not grow up because of mice or birds or disease, he will be reasonably chary of again doing only what Mr. Woolf tells him. He, too, will learn by experience. If he is as foolish as most human beings, he will assume that Mr. Woolf was wrong and try to get peas by sowing thistles or planting green cheese under a full moon. If he is sensible he will say, "No doubt Mr. Woolf was quite right about how to sow peas, and I shall take his advice again. But I must get some other advice as well; for what was the use of my sowing peas correctly when the garden was full of mice or birds or disease?" And so before sowing peas next time he will take precautions against the pests that have nullified Mr. Woolf's sound advice. Such a man who wants peace will read Mr. Woolf's new book and not overlook a footnote near the end of it. Here Mr. Woolf explains that he has deliberately left out anything about capitalism in this book, not because he doubts that capitalism "has played a tremendous part in creating the international anarchy of to-day but because what he says about the need of international government is true whatever the forces working against it and would remain true if all the States in the world were Socialist." Quite so. He is again content to tell the man who wants to grow peas how to plant them, but for some reason or another, thinks it unnecessary to give good advice about the mice and the disease. This is not mental sclerosis. No one could read this book, clear, witty and sane, and think that Mr. Woolf suffered from hardening of the mental arteries. But they might reasonably say that he is obstinately refusing to take into account factors that are very relevant to his problem of peace and that while his conclusions of twenty-five years ago remained true to-day as far as they go, they do not go nearly far enough. In a word, Mr. Woolf is not wrong in appealing to human reason; he is only wrong in over-simplifying his diagnosis and arguing from premises which, though true in themselves, have been shown by experience to be inadequate.

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The Hamlet. By WILLIAM FAULKNER. *Chatto and Windus.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The Twenty-Fifth Hour. By HERBERT BEST. *Cape.* 8*s.*

Death of a Common Man. By DESMOND HOLDRIDGE. *Hale.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Jacaranda. By KATHLEEN BELLAMY. *Methuen.* 8*s.*

The most obvious difference between fiction in the 'thirties and in the 'twenties is that the earlier decade had its Big Names. In spite of Eliot's poetry the post-war period was largely a time of prose. But since the death of Lawrence fiction has flattened out at the top: the succeeding generation was dominated by its poets. This deflection of energy into a renewed verse has produced a sort of undertow in fiction towards the stricter form and more compressed economy of the short story, which is as near as prose can get to the formal conditions of verse. The group of writers in which Pritchett, Plomer, Elizabeth Bowen, Frank O'Connor and James Hanley are roughly contemporary (at any rate historically so) has on the whole had better success with the short story than the novel.

If we date the last decade from the death of Lawrence to the outbreak of war—the pink poetic 'thirties—it will be seen that, in the novel of the period, the Big Names have been less prominent and no new figures of uncommonly massive stature have climbed over the horizon. Forster, Virginia Woolf and Hemingway have lapsed into varying degrees of quiescence, and Maugham has formally retired; Joyce is now a legend, a period heirloom that one would have to commit to the auction-room; Wells is more exclusively than ever the penny pontiff of current affairs; and Huxley apparently aims to become a "thinker" of the Wellsian sort, though without the gusto of a vulgar optimism. In one way or another there is either retirement, or a diversion of interest which reduces the novel to an expository tract.

To all this the one major exception is William Faulkner. He is exclusively preoccupied with fiction, his output is constant and fairly prolific, and he has some of that amplitude of dimension which makes a lasting mark on a wide audience. Of his enduring consequence there may be some doubt, but I can think of no one among current novelists who is yet able to dispute Faulkner's supremacy.

The Hamlet is highly characteristic, both of Faulkner's merits and of his defects. The scene is once again the Southern States, Faulkner's own country, an agricultural backwoods where the negro makes a suppressed ground-bass to the rancorous quarrelling of embittered white men. The cardinal Faulkner situation is easily parodied: there will be laconic men leaning against something and brooding over the action like a whole posse of Conradesque Marlows, there will be a rank Wagnerian female miasma luring hot-blooded men to destruction, there will be a sinister idiot-boy and men with blasted eyes and souls doomed to damnation, and over it all a constant lightning of anger and pointless rage, striking and lashing the characters into dramatically grotesque attitudes. Mr. Faulkner's world is occupied by a few passions and sensations, elemental in their structure and

violent in their articulation. Dog eats dog, with no pity and precious little remorse.

The Hamlet is devoted to a family called Snopes, which settles like a plague of locusts and eats up the substance of the village. Flem Snopes gets a stranglehold on the store; various relatives take over the school, the blacksmith's and so on; and the book ends with Flem beginning to establish himself in the market-town of the district. That ostensibly is the story, but in place of a continuous narrative Mr. Faulkner develops a series of separate incidents in which one or other of the Snopes family is involved. Some of these sketches are so self-sufficient and complete in themselves that it is not always easy to find a connection between them. The result is not so much a novel as a series of stories grouped round a common theme; part of *The Hamlet* indeed has been published separately, as part of *The Unvanquished* was also, and this trick of partitioning a novel suggests a weakness of construction which seems to be inherent in Faulkner's method.

At his best Faulkner is a great recorder of the details of sensation, a receptive and exhaustive writer. Given a murder, or an epileptic trying to walk downstairs, or an angry man looking for something, Faulkner can wring out every shade and inflection of the moment-to-moment experience. He reminds me of the old Red Indian and Cowboy movies—his character sits in the covered waggon, and Faulkner circles round and round with the gyrating, hypnotic concentration of the scalp-hunter. It is in these enormous improvisations on a momentary spasm of rage or lust or fear that Faulkner's talent is most effective. He keeps up a constant fusillade of sharply phrased imagery, searching out further and further implications, until he has worked up into full view the whole man or woman, snapshotted at this one entirely revealing moment, scarred with the irremediable curse of human existence and reeling towards that eternal damnation into which all Faulkner's people are finally gathered.

But to stand at such point-blank range exacts a price. Perspective and sequence are not there. The style of growth is a boundless proliferation without architecture, a steaming jungle of words through which the reader must struggle to hack a coherent path from here to there. The texture of Mr. Faulkner's prose is of a tropical richness and density, the colour and sound have a sensuous magnificence, the ambience hums with an impenetrable magic. The scene in *The Hamlet* where the idiot elopes with a cow—in spite of its verging on self-burlesque, in spite of an occasional literariness, in spite of such awkward phrasing as "slackflood's coronal of nympholept noon"—is in a category by itself, so far as current fiction is concerned. But it remains a piece of astounding virtuosity, something whipped up for its own sake, and not subordinated to any structural purpose (for the good reason that the book scarcely has one). In a sense the whole of Faulkner is a stupendous deathbed scene in which the tragic poetry of a lifetime lights up the damned soul as it makes its dive into perdition. It is the instant of ending that Faulkner really sees. The rest is brilliantly improvised, all telescoped together, as the curtain comes down. I can hardly think of a character that Faulkner touches without immediately exhausting it to the point where it must die, figuratively if not literally. Such building up as there is is perfunctory. As soon as Faulkner's rather turgid rhythm begins to swing out in its gyre, one knows that he will settle parasitically on his victim until it has been exhausted; that he will then abandon it and turn to the next. In this way one protagonist after another is paraded, consumed and forgotten. *The Hamlet* is a gallery of such portraits, united only in a realisation of the eloquent and fascinating horror of human existence, modified by nothing but a humour so arid and sardonic that

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it finally destroys all hope of escape. As with the plays of Webster, this is a deliberate rhetoric of death, sombre and opulent, with a brilliant sense of "the exquisite chromatics of decay."

After Faulkner the usual weekly run of novels has a sickly look. Mr. Best, however, has my hat off for his courage in taking a topical theme at a time when the whole world seems to be provisional from one news bulletin to the next. *The Twenty-Fifth Hour* attempts to forecast the history of the immediate future. According to Mr. Best the air-bomber will destroy all social organisation so effectively that the warring nations will collapse into an anarchy of individuals preying on each other for bare existence. This gives the book an excellent opening scene in which a nomadic party of English soldiers storm a Lithuanian castle to gain winter quarters. The United States are disposed of in a rather factitious way, Australia is conveniently omitted, and the civilised world reverts to cannibalism. But for all his initial originality Mr. Best lapses into a conventional "love-interest," and all ends happily in Egypt. *The Twenty-Fifth Hour* is an engaging fantasy to play with, and I suspect it will have a strong sociological interest in the twenty-fifth year of its existence.

Mr. Holdridge and Miss Bellamy both write about South America—but with what a difference! *Death of a Common Man* is a simply written story of an Indian's experience of civilisation. The boy's adventures are told with an almost pastoral freshness and innocence, the unusual background is obviously drawn from first-hand knowledge, there are some gaily comic scenes and a genuine pathos in the conclusion. Altogether a very likeable, honest, unpretentious book about an uncommonly interesting subject.

Miss Bellamy, as circuitous as Mr. Holdridge is direct, writes:

> I abandon my senseless body to its chosen sun-destruction while I fly out and out to where the willows sweep me within the cool splendour of their soft-entwining leaves, and bearing me on and on I come to where silver points within my head illuminate, with an almost ethereal radiance, a well of indigo. . . . All action and reaction, blending into star shapes of exquisite beauty, dance with quick projected motion further and yet further into the distance, a distance into which I now tentatively project an awkward thought-fantasy. . . . At last head-first I sink and sink, deepening into clouds—down and down.

Here I also sank and sank, further and yet further, on and on, down and down, out and out. It's a knock-out. DESMOND HAWKINS

AN ENGLISHWOMAN'S POLAND

My Name is Million. The Experiences of an Englishwoman in Poland. ANON. *Faber and Faber.* 8s. 6d.

To read of an air raid during the course of an air raid is an experience for which a reviewer's training does not prepare him. But, thanks to the quality of the printed word, it is not an impossible task; and little by little one grows less attentive to the hum of approaching planes, responds with fewer nervous starts to the slamming of gunfire—a vast muffled front-door being banged at the end of some prodigious passage—while *then* and *now* begin to coalesce in the same reality. Behind the London of September, 1940, lies the Warsaw of almost exactly a year ago. There are differences—very considerable differences—in background and atmosphere. London is a strongly defended city: Warsaw was unprepared and undefended. Among the emotions so vividly and passionately rendered by the anonymous authoress of *My Name is Million* (an Englishwoman married to a Polish engineer) not the least painful was the sense of utter helplessness, of blind fury in the face of systematic methodical destruction, that dogged a fugitive non-combatant from start to finish. Her book is essentially a personal record. To say that it is "a woman's book" is not to impugn its value; for passion is the element in which the writer moves, and regret and indignation give her narrative its force and eloquence. She writes as if to escape from the obsession of memory—to lay ghosts that can never be finally laid, that she fears yet cherishes.

Loss is the keynote. What she has herself lost is an adopted country, a home, and the whole complex of affections and associations with which habit surrounds us during the lapse of years. A brief, simply phrased *Postscript* completes the tragedy. Having exchanged the perils of German-invaded for the dangers of Russian-controlled Poland, the authoress and her husband were able to cross the Lithuanian frontier. From Kovno they went to Riga, from Riga to Revel. Thence they traversed the Baltic in a neutral ship, on their way to Stockholm:

> A quarter of an hour out of the Swedish territorial waters, the ship was captured by a German cruiser. A German crew, armed with machine guns and hand grenades, was put aboard and took us to a port in Germany. In this port we were handed over to the Gestapo. Days later, I was freed and given a visa out of Germany. I never saw A. again.

Thus, in a few lines of her last paragraph, does the authoress dispose of a major catastrophe, beside which other catastrophes might seem almost bearable. Elsewhere it is with Poland's sufferings rather than with her own that she is chiefly preoccupied; and towards Poland her feelings are possessive and romantic, untroubled by any attempt at political judgment. That *her* Poland may not have been everybody's Poland, and that to some Poles the system that vanished in 1939 may have meant at best a life of endless and senseless labour, are possibilities she shows no inclination to discuss or analyse. Looking back on the country she knew in peacetime—the chivalry and charm of her husband's friends, the beauty of a Polish summer landscape, the splendour of palaces and parks and gardens—she swears allegiance to it as to a human being beloved and lamented.

Lack of detachment implies no corresponding lack of clarity. In its somewhat disconnected and episodic manner, *My Name is Million* is an unusually well-written book. Not overloaded with detail or burdened with comment, it should succeed in conveying, even to the least imaginative English reader, the horror of a life from which all the props of civilised living have been pulled away. It brings home once again the heart-break, squalor, confusion that accompany modern warfare, when communications have collapsed, news fails to filter along the expected channels and death drones day and night above huddling refugees. Hardest to bear of all the trials encountered by the writer was the sight of Nazi planes making their leisurely trips, backwards and forwards, without opposition:

> Two German reconnaissance planes hovered over us and went away again, flying very slowly, their noses turned towards their base in East Prussia. It was early afternoon. This was their second home flight in the day. Before dusk they would come over a third time, and then go home for the night, exactly like birds going home to a rookery. After the first few days, the German Air Force did as it liked over the whole country. I hardly remember a moment when you could look up at the sky and not see some of them. They did not always remind me of birds. Only in dream-like scenes such as these, when they flew low over a quiet countryside, reconnoitring, making bird's-eye photographs, sailing along just missing the tallest trees in the forests, soberly making for home at the approach of darkness.

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She herself had her full share of intensive punishment—bombed in Warsaw (to which, after a short journey into the country, she found there was no means of returning); bombed on the high road and in a refugee train; bombed and nearly accounted for at the ruined blazing junction of Brzecz-nad-Bugiem. At last she reached Polesie, in the eastern marshlands:

> . . . a queer country. There is still jungle there and the only virgin forest in Europe; waterfowl and strange fish and innumerable prairie flowers. The elk still skims above the marshes and the last aurochs in the world moves ponderously through the forest. The golden lynx, as long as a jaguar, glides along the giant trees like a patch of sunlight. The black stork walks about all the summer. The Great Houses stand on islands and the villages are linked by boats. In winter the white partridge comes when the snow comes.

But, even here, there was no peace: for very soon the inhabitants of the wooden manor house (presided over, devotedly and competently, by octogenarian Pani N., with her old dresses, patched stockings and cobbled boots) learned of the fifth partition of Poland and began to expect the arrival of Soviet forces. For them, it was the end: to their peasants, the beginning of a new, wonderful, long-anticipated era. The account of the nerve-racking days that followed, of the gradual change in the relationship between masters and peasantry—vaguely restive yet still held down by the traditions of a thousand years—is one of the best things in the entire volume. The fact that the authoress distrusted the peasants—"nobody meant much harm, but nobody did any good": stores were wasted: beasts were left to die—and conceived a natural hatred for the Soviet commissars, who did their job with cold, methodical efficiency, does not lessen the effect produced by her narrative. It is for her readers to draw conclusions from the tale she tells. At any other period, they might have been tempted to point a moral; but moralising seems to have gone out with the use of cavalry. Power politics and mechanised warfare have dictated a revision of standards. We can no longer rationalise: we must learn to accept, till the eventual All Clear.

PETER QUENNELL

THE NAVY IN ACTION

The Navy in Action. By "TAFFRAIL." *Hodder and Stoughton.* 5s.

H.M.S.: His Majesty's Ships and Their Forbears. By CECIL KING. *Studio.* 12s. 6d.

The Navy in Action is, in the main, a narrative of the war at sea, from the sinking of the *Graf Spee* to the evacuation of Dunkirk, although it includes a few essays on the last war and a description of the sinking of the *Lusitania*. Captain Dorling has used only already published material, and those who read their newspapers seriously will be familiar with most of what he relates. His book, however, is a useful compilation, and shows the general outline of the present naval position in clearer perspective than can be seen from day-to-day reports.

After a year of practical experiment it seems clear that high specialisation in warship construction does not always pay. The failure of the pocket battleships as commerce raiders is not wholly due to the skill of the light cruisers that defeated the *Graf Spee*, but is a consequence of the fundamental defects that the action off the River Plate revealed. So far as can be gathered from the voluminous but sometimes contradictory accounts of the engagement, the battleship was too heavily gunned for her displacement, with the result that vibration made it impossible to fire an accurate salvo while she was moving at high speed. The light cruisers, too, seem to have been, comparatively, tougher in construction than their opponent,

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for, with the exception of the *Exeter*, none of them was crippled despite repeated hits, whereas the German vessel suffered extensive, and, in effect, fatal damage. Similar features can be found in the sinking of the *Bartolomeo Colleoni*. Here, too, was an extremely fast, heavily gunned vessel of light tonnage, specially designed for individual action; and here, too, a few hits from guns of no overwhelming calibre were sufficient to destroy her. The British Navy, because of its world-wide sphere of action and the diverse roles it may be called upon to play, has been unable to indulge in the freak one-purpose ships favoured by the Continental navies, and has, particularly in cruisers, sacrificed predominance in speed, or armament, or armour to an efficient compromise between all three. It has always been admitted that certain classes of enemy warship might prove superior when fighting under the conditions for which they were built, and it is a matter for surprise and congratulation that so far these conditions have not, apparently, arisen. Perhaps, though, highly specialised warships, like the great reptiles and the fifteenth-century knights, have developed their offensive qualities at the expense of every other, and may prove to be really formidable only in combat with their own kind. Another encouraging feature of the first year of war is the excellence of British gunnery, which compares very favourably with that of 1914. At both battles of Narvik the British destroyers scored hits far more freely than did their heavier opponents, and in Italian waters battleships have repeatedly made hits at almost extreme target range. The enemy, although reputedly outstanding gunners, have on several occasions seemed to be flustered in action; their failure to inflict losses at the Second Battle of Narvik, for instance, cannot be attributed solely to our good manoeuvring.

The Navy in Action is description, not analysis; and these and other questions are suggested rather than discussed. It is, however, written with all Taffrail's vigorous enjoyment, and tells its stories as fully as can be expected until the Temple of Janus is shut and the archives of the Admiralties flung open.

H.M.S. is a haphazard scrap-book of British Naval history. There are enthusiastic accounts of victories (interspersed, occasionally, with dissertations on paint-work or epaulettes), bare mentions of defeats, hurried references, carefully omitted from an otherwise extensive index, to the mutinies at Spithead and the Nore, with the allegation that the mutineers at the latter place were not "real seamen," little anecdotes about the jollier admirals, and much information upon ensigns, mizzens and gun-ports. In his own muddled way, Mr. King offers a good deal of intriguing information. The *Arke Royall*, for instance, was flagship against the Armada; the new battleship *Temeraire* is named in commemoration of a French vessel of that name captured in 1759 (will our descendants ever see an *H.M.S. Graf Spee?*); *Merlin* vies with *Resolution* among the most often-repeated warship-names. Mr. King has not, perhaps, the mind of a general historian, and is fond of such observations as "In founding the Holy Roman Empire in A.D. 800 Charlemagne, no doubt, acted from the best motives, but things did not turn out quite as he foresaw" or "Algeria was occupied by France from 1830 to 1847, and became entirely civilised," or again "The Austrians are well known as a cultured and artistic people, and Vienna, like Paris, was for many years a centre of culture." Yet, if he can give no broad picture of his subject, the author collects much curious detail about some of its facets, and provides, for those interested in the matter, a useful table of the forbears of serving warships. *H.M.S.*, moreover, contains a great many excellent reproductions of marine prints and paintings, and stands as a naval portfolio whatever its faults as a history.

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A DARK CITY

The Lights Go Down. By ERIKA MANN. *Secker.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

A book like this was badly needed, a book which reveals in a form which the ordinary public can easily be persuaded to read, what life is like in an average provincial town under the Nazi regime. Not how the heroic party comrade gets the pamphlets distributed, nor how the unvanquished proletariat sabotages the munition output; but how you or I, the small manufacturer, the A.R.P. worker, the student, the journalist, the secretary, the servant girl would live under the constant threat of persecution, petty or large-scale, in a town like York. We have often enough read in our papers extracts from Nazi periodicals, speeches, journals which give us hints at the quality of the regimented life. But we do not really believe them, certainly do not apply them to ourselves until someone like Erika Mann arrives to vitalise them.

The Lights Go Down is an ingenious and telling solution of the problem. The bare facts—fully documented in an index—come to life in ten stories centred round a typical German town. The characters are ordinary folk who may or may not be members of the Nazi Party—they usually are—but who mostly accept what "they" tell them at its face value. Everyone knew, of course, that Huber's factory was not really making "peace angels—nice, shiny peace angels"; but everyone believed that the "peace angels" would never be used; hadn't the Führer a fine record behind him of bloodless victories? Everyone had accepted the Nazi "regeneration of the State." Hadn't each one of them been promised something? Unfortunately, the promises were self-contradictory; and no one had troubled to notice the promises to other people. These simple, everyday people had—this is the point of the book—no more notion of what the National Socialist State really meant than had your aunt or the vicar or the manager of the chain store in the pre-war days. Its incidence on them was less likely to be the dramatic concentration camp than distrust between wife and husband, an easy compromise with an uneasy conscience, a gradual relaxation of the moral fibre and a passive acceptance of their inability to alter things.

The Lights Go Down is naturally partial; perhaps too little weight is given to the other side, to the romance, if only a romantic pleasure in destruction, which must have succeeded in captivating the young. But its partiality is not doctrinaire; it is based, even a little too solidly, on the virtues of things as they were; and for this reason it is the best sort of introduction for the non-political older generation. That is not meant as faint praise. Each story, in fact, is vividly written and neatly contrived; the characters are drawn with a warm humanity and an understanding of the bases of ordinary life. Maurice Samuel's translation is commendably lively.

T. C. WORSLEY

OLD BROADSIDES

Rare Prologues and Epilogues. By AUTREY NELL WILEY. *Allen and Unwin.* 15*s.*

In this book Professor Wiley gives the literary student something not only interesting but, to all intents and purposes, new. With immense diligence she has collected, from all possible sources, a number of prologues and epilogues, from 1642 to 1700, which it is quite impossible to see elsewhere; and the most determined explorer in out-of-the-way places will never have seen these broadsheets before. Each extract is prefaced by a short biographical note; and appendices give full lists of authors, the plays they advertised, the publishers, and the first lines. One can only stagger in astonishment at the thought of the labour such a work must have cost.

The device was far from a mere appendage to a play. It was applied to all sorts of purposes—to provide a bill of fare, to plead for leniency, to flatter, to satirise, or in any way whatever to let off steam. Where a play's success was dubious, it might be worth while to pay "Mr. Dryden" two or three guineas for his services; and Mr. Dryden might take his chance of ventilating ideas which had been simmering in his mind for some time, whether they had much to do with the plot of the play or not. Or a popular comedian like Joe Haynes might take the stage, and with a few clever turns put the audience into the requisite good humour.

The specimens which Miss Wiley has collected have often an historical importance; many of them, for example, deal with the Popish Plot, and there are vigorous allusions to the Salamanca Doctor. As a rule, the writers, for obvious reasons, favour the Tory side: and when Haynes appears with a flail or a scythe we know he is alluding to the Protestant joiner or to the pitiful arms of the Sedgemoor rebels.

We find here names that are well known in other spheres. "Scum" Goodman, familiar as a favourite of the Duchess of Cleveland and as a mover in the Assassination Plot of 1695, appears here as speaking the epilogue to Lee's *Mithridates* and the prologue to *Constantine the Great*; while Doggett, once a famous playwright, and here shown to have been much in demand for prologues and epilogues, is probably better remembered, at least by oarsmen, for his Coat and Badge. I have not Courthope's Pope at hand; but I imagine even readers of that monumental work will learn for the first time

that Sir Fopling's words in the *Rape of the Lock*, "Those eyes are made so killing," are a quotation from a popular song sung by Mrs. Bracegirdle in an epilogue to a play of Mrs. Centlivre's.

The illustrations must not be passed over. There are seven of them, all excellent, beginning with a facsimile of the earliest dated broadside: "The Prologue to his Majesty at the Cock-pit in Whitehall, being part of that Noble Entertainment which their Majesties received from his Grace the Duke of Albemarle"; and there is another representing Shuter riding in on an ass to speak one of Haynes's epilogues.

In a book like this it is plain that a misprint or two may be a mark of accuracy. A correct copy of an old manuscript carefully reproduces its mistakes. But I should like to know whether Hew (p. 84), "Rot your old-fashion'd Hew in Romance" does not stand for *hero*; whether "*Thou* and Woden" (pp. 306 and 308) should not be "Thor and Woden"; whether "The Devils it 't'" does not read "in't" in the original; and whether "Rehearsally" (p. 239) ought not to be "Rehearsal."

It remains to congratulate Professor Wiley on a most learned and useful work, and her readers on the austere pleasure they will derive from it.

E. E. KELLETT

Horsted Keynes, Sussex: The Church and Parish of St. Giles. By F. STENTON EARDLEY, Rector of the Parish. (*Macmillan*, vellum, 10s. net, cloth 3s. 6d. net. Profits to the fabric of the Church.)

Among Home County villages whose charms have of late years attracted Londoners, Horsted Keynes has stood high from the time the three Benson brothers introduced into book after book descriptions of the beautiful home their mother had found there. Those who have adopted or visited the place, and still more those who knew it when it was known to few, will find absorbing interest in the present Rector's history of church and parish. So also may many others, some of whom will, we may hope, find inspiration to go and do likewise for their own parishes, since it is in the quiet chronicles of the *petite patrie* that the body of history lies hidden "under the drums and tramplings of three conquests," though not, if we die to defeat it, of a fourth.

The Rector has amassed a considerable body of facts, and has put them together in lucid and orderly fashion. Perhaps his best pages are those in which he reconstructs the visit of the Commissioners of William the Conqueror; he brings the scene before us without any of those pseudo-historical circumstances which are so popular. The church, as in every sense the chief house in the place, naturally engages most of his attention. Its history is long and rich, beginning with a Saxon church, of which only traces remain, and concluding in the fifteenth century with the slender broached spire, the loveliest thing in the district.

We should like to know more of the continuous history of the place. When did ironworking cease? What happened to the advowson at the Suppression of Lewes Priory? Again, the illuminating Day Book of the Commonwealth and Restoration Rector, Giles Moore, is represented by extracts with hardly any comment. And we regret to say that the book abounds in slips to be put right in another edition.

Labour and Democracy in the United States. By KENNETH WHITE. *University Press of Liverpool*, and *Hodder and Stoughton*. 12s. 6d.

This book is much the best account that has yet appeared in England of the development of the American Trade Union movement since the beginning of the New Deal. It gives an excellent history of the struggle, first inside the American Federation of Labour, and then outside it, to organise the main body of workers in the great mass-production industries of the United States, of the development of the Congress of Industrial Organisations, and of the relations between the new forces in the American Labour movement and the various Government agencies established in connection with the New Deal. It does not purport to give any full account of President Roosevelt's social legislation; but it does review broadly the history of the President's first and second administrations, up to 1939, and describe those parts of the Roosevelt social programme which most closely concern the Labour movement. Mr. White's sympathies are very definitely with the C.I.O., and he makes very powerful criticisms of the obstructive tactics followed by the leaders of the American Federation of Labour. The A.F. of L., as he points out, remains in effect a narrow aristocracy of skilled workers, both afraid of undertaking the organisation of the great mass of less skilled workers and, in many instances, even hostile to their claims. In addition, Mr. White describes somewhat luridly the political background of the American scene, pointing out very clearly the formidable obstacles which the system of party organisation, and especially the direct primary, puts in the way of the effective growth of a new party, which, in order to be effective, must spread its efforts over all the States, and win victories on a large scale in State as well as in Federal politics. His most general conclusion is that under the American tradition the success of the Labour movement in the political field must depend on winning over, or at least neutralising, the wielders of political power, and that the victories won in recent years by the C.I.O. would have been impossible without the support both of sympathetic Governors in States, and of a Government on the whole friendly at Washington itself.

The Economic History of Steel-making, 1867-1939. A Study in Competition. By D. L. BURN. *Cambridge University Press*. 27s. 6d.

This is economic history of the school of Professor Clapham—erudite, careful, nearly exhaustive, and dull to read. Mr. Burn has an admirably thorough

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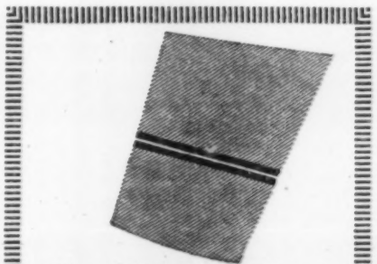
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knowledge of his subject; and his book is one from which other writers will continue to steal for many years to come. He knows the technique as well as the economics of steel-making, and provides an invaluable record of the changing phases of the industry from the great change-over from iron to steel which followed the inventions of Bessemer and Siemens to the most recent exploits of Continental steelmakers in the arts of cartellisation and of the British in eliminating "redundant" capacity in order to hold up profits, even after they had received a high protective tariff on the plea that it would enable them to reorganise for the recapture of their lost markets. Mr. Burn tells very ably the story of these machinations of the past dozen years, though again and again he leaves the facts to speak instead of pressing any conclusion home. This is *the* standard history, and unlikely to be superseded. It is a pity the blight of Dr. Clapham's style and method has been allowed to descend so heavily upon it.

Week-end Competitions

No. 555

Set by Thomas Smallbones

Reading in Henry James the other night I came across this sentence: "'I shall go to America,' said Mme. Merle, and then she passed out." Competitors are invited to submit similar instances where a word or a phrase gives the modern reader a second, ludicrous meaning. References should be given and the usual prizes are offered for the best example.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, c/o Cornwall Press, Paris Garden, Stamford St., S.E.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, October 7.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 553

Set by T. C. Worsley

A first prize of two guineas and a second of half a guinea are offered for a triolet on any pre-war pleasure. Competitors may send in as many as they like.

Report by T. C. Worsley

The triolet is a simple, sentimental form peculiarly suited to expressing nostalgia. It was agreeable to find that Greed was the unabashed mood of a large number of competitors, only one of whom was mean enough to hide behind a fictitious attribution—but his or her yearning for goodies was too sincere in expression to be adequately concealed by "A Schoolboy's Wish" (quoted below). A purist, I disqualified those who did not abide by the strictnesses of the form. The refinement of the triolet is to work in the repeated lines in an altered sense, whether by punctuation or mere juxtaposition. But ultimately it must be judged by an effective simplicity in which the repetitions pass unnoticed as such. Nancy Wutherspoon (address please!) excelled, it seemed to me, by this criterion and wins the first prize. The second I should like to divide between Edgar Holt and Derek Neame. In front of the prize-winners I quote a number from which they were selected:

An hour at the Tate
Or the British Museum,
There could you see 'em.
An hour at the Tate—
No tuum or meum
But ours were the great.
An hour at the Tate
Or the British Museum.
R. S. JAFFRAY

I'd like to eat six cream meringues
And seven chocolate éclairs.
Could I just eat and feel no pangs,
I'd like to eat: six cream meringues
Would be as nothing to my fangs.
Could I just eat and feel no cares,
I'd like to eat six cream meringues
And seven chocolate éclairs. E. O. T.

No more, my suitcase, preen your painted labels—
The foreign suns no longer shine for us
Nor ours the smells, the frantic station babels,
No more, my suitcase, preen your painted labels—
Garlic, and leisure, seas blue as post-card fables,
And stripy awnings shading sunburnt tables. . . .
No more, my suitcase, preen your painted labels:
The foreign suns no longer shine for us.
SUSANNE KNOWLES

I love lots of light
In the windows of shops.
It's a civilised sight:
I love lots of light.
As I bus home at night
To my meal of chump chops,
I love lots of light
In the windows of shops.
TOWANBUCKET

No more we'll drink in France, alas,
For Hitler won't admit you.
The Boche bestrides the Montparnasse;
No more we'll drink in France, alas,
No more refill a genial glass
Of burgundy *in situ*.
No more we'll drink in France, alas,
For Hitler won't admit you.
H. K. THOMSON

There used to be canoodling in the Park
Twixt night and morning,
Where happy couples strolled in lamplit dark
There used to be canoodling. In the Park
Tranquillity still reigns while wardens hark
For time-bombs warning—
There used to be canoodling in the Park
Twixt night and morning!
PHYLLIS VALLANCE

You were my lady, Annabelle,
Before you joined the A.T.S.
Before the first bomb ever fell
You were my lady. Annabelle,
Why did you break the tender spell?
Now Cupid's self would never guess
You were my lady, Annabelle,
Before you joined the A.T.S.
HUGH MACKINTOSH

It used to be fun
To put code in a cable:
And to carry a gun
Was most excellent fun
If you spoke like a Hun
And drew maps on the table.
Oh! it *used* to be fun
To put code in a cable.
GRAGGE N.A.2

Astronomy was my delight—
But something's spoilt my calculations.
New stars appear and fade each night—
Astronomy *was* my delight,
But I'm become a troglodyte
To hide from falling constellations.
Astronomy was my delight—
But something's spoilt my calculations.
N. LEWIS

FIRST PRIZE

Oh why can't we make toffee
Like what we used to do?
Nurse she gets all huffy.
Oh why can't we make toffee?
She still has her coffee
With rum poured in it, too!
So why can't we make toffee
Like what we used to do?
NANCY WUTHERSPOON

SECOND PRIZES

I used to drink my Pernod at Bordeaux,
Watching the pretty typists take the air.
Was it last year, or was it years ago,
I used to drink my Pernod? At Bordeaux
Weygand forgot the words of Clemenceau,
And now aggressive Germans, sitting where
I used to, drink *my* Pernod at Bordeaux,
Watching the pretty typists take the air.
EDGAR HOLT

O for the armchair politics
In the days ere *someone blundered:*
Many a night from ten to six
We *rentiers* would chat and mix
Our drinks, and never see the fix,
And now we shall be plundered:
O for the armchair politics
In the days ere *someone blundered.*
DEREK NEAME

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

THE STOCK EXCHANGE FIRM FRONT—HOLD FAST OR EVACUATE?—BRICK AND CEMENT SHARES

THE Stock Exchange, happily, is not letting the country down. It has thrown off its miserable past, when it jittered at every international crisis, and has imbibed the undaunted spirit of London. After every air raid it shows a firm front. Old 3½ per cent. War Loan has actually risen to 101⅜, the New 3 per cent. holds fast to 100 and Old Consols at 73¾ obstinately refuses to allow the long-term rate of interest to rise above £3 7s. 9d. per cent. (This is equivalent to only £1 19s. 0d. per cent. after tax at 8s. 6d., and if any petty rentier survives the wartime rise in the cost of living without recourse to charity relief it will be a miracle.) Looking back to July, 1939 (the peak for that year), British industrial shares on the average have fallen by only 30 per cent., and investors have now become determined not to be frightened out of their holdings whatever happens. Indeed, the horrid sight of demolished shops and homes in London has had no apparent effect upon the market except to cause a demand for cement and brick shares.

* * *

Having added my humble word of praise to the Stock Exchange for its display of grit, I have to confess that it is transacting practically no business. Even if it had much business to do, there would be little time to transact it in between the air-raid alarms. Stock Exchange business is gathered mainly over the telephone, and as Government priorities make telephoning virtually impossible to and from London during the day, stockbrokers have ample time on their hands to count up their losses. Postal delays add to their difficulties, seeing that the prices of securities quoted are of no value to client or stockbroker when the letter arrives several days late. I suspect that a good deal of the Government telephoning which has priority is not actually concerned with the prosecution of the war. Has the Cabinet considered the advisability of removing more of its civil administration departments to the country, where they would not hold up the daily business of hard-working firms in London? Or, if they prefer to keep the seat of all Government in London, have they considered the wisdom of ordering non-essential private trade away from London? I presume that the Stock Exchange is not an essential business for London. It can be conducted anywhere, given telephones and an efficient postal service. Why should it, therefore, be allowed to add to the congestion on the London transport system? Only because it cannot reasonably move while the Bank of England and the joint stock banks retain their head offices in London. But are the bank directors helping us to win the war by remaining in the fortress of London? I am glad to see that the Stock Exchange Committee has suggested to jobbers and brokers that they should arrange for members of their staff to attend at the office on alternate days only. This will help to lessen the traffic congestion to a slight extent, but I would like to see many more useless civilians cleared from City and West End streets.

* * *

Returning to brick and cement shares, I agree that these are the best of peacetime recovery shares (subject to the exigencies of taxation), but as I do not know how long the war will last (but would count it lucky to see the end before 1942), I would not run after them in 1940. The leaders have already had a considerable rise:

	Prices end August	To-day	Last Div.	Div. Yield
London Brick ...	32/-	40/-	10%	5%
Associated Portland Cement	45/-	57/6	Est. 12½%	4.35%

London Brick has only paid a dividend of 10 per cent. for 1939, and the directors warned their shareholders that they could not expect another dividend until the full results of the year's trading were available. This looks as if 10 per cent. for 1940 would be a maximum. The Associated Portland Cement directors paid 15 per cent. for 1939 but have reduced the interim this year to 5 per cent. This seems to suggest 12½ per cent. for the year 1940. The current yields are not handsome at present market prices, and I doubt whether the rise should be followed any further.

* * *

The present cheerfulness of Mr. J. M. Keynes is very encouraging as far as it goes, but he has warned us that it might not go very far. The period of financial strain is only just beginning and will not be seen at its worst until the end of the present financial year. By that time Mr. Keynes, I suspect believes that the Government will be forced to adopt his plan of Compulsory Saving. In the meantime, the campaign for Voluntary Saving will be speeded up—what a boon Spitfire Funds have been to this movement, if to no other!—and we shall draw more on our capital abroad by forced levy. There is an interesting proposal in America to lend $2,000 millions to Canada on the pledging of the British-owned securities now on deposit in that country.

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Prof. HAROLD LASKI on

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SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. Sunday, September 29, at 11 a.m. Laurence Housman: "Dead Certainties." Admission Free.

ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, Bayswater, W.2. Morning Service only. Sept. 29th at 11. H. J. BLACKHAM: "THE FUTURE OF THE MASSES."

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BEATRICE KING: "FAMILY LIFE IN U.S.S.R.," Sat., Sept. 28th, 2.30. S.C.R., Plane Tree, 106 Gt. Russell St., W.C.1.

PROF. J. B. S. HALDANE, F.R.S., on "THE RECENT SOVIET CONFERENCE ON GENETICS." Caxton Hall, S.W.1. Sat., Oct. 5, 2.30 p.m. Tickets, 1s. 0d. from S.C.R., 98 Gower Street, W.C. 1.

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